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THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

WILLIAM COWPER

WITH A MEMOIR

PR3380
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1879
V. 2

THREE VOLUMES IN TWO

VOL. II.

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CONTENTS.

VOL. II.

TRANSLATIONS FROM THE FRENCH OF MADAME DE LA MOTHE GUION.

	Page
The Nativity	1
God neither known nor loved by the World	7
The Swallow	9
The Triumph of Heavenly Love desired	10
A Figurative Description of the Procedure of Divine Love	11
A Child of God longing to see him beloved	14
Aspirations of the Soul after God	16
Gratitude and Love to God	17
Happy Solitude—Unhappy Men	18
Living Water	19
Truth and Divine Love rejected by the World	19
Divine Justice Amiable	20
The Soul that loves God finds him everywhere	22
The Testimony of Divine Adoption	23
Divine Love endures no Rival	25
Self-diffidence	26
The Acquiescence of Pure Love	28
Repose in God	29
Glory to God alone	29
Self-love and Truth incompatible	31
The Love of God the End of Life	32
Love Faithful in the Absence of the Beloved	33
Love Pure and Fervent	33
The Entire Surrender	34
The Perfect Sacrifice	35
God hides his People	35
The Secrets of Divine Love are to be kept	37
The Vicissitudes experienced in the Christian Life	42

Watching unto God in the Night Season 46
On the same 48
On the same 50
The Joy of the Cross 52
Joy in Martyrdom 55
Simple Trust 56
The Necessity of Self-abasement 57
Love increased by Suffering 59
Scenes favourable to Meditation 60

TRANSLATIONS OF THE LATIN AND ITALIAN POEMS OF MILTON.

Elegy I. To Charles Deodati 63
Elegy II. On the Death of the University Beadle at Cambridge 66
Elegy III. On the Death of the Bishop of Winchester . 68
Elegy IV. To his Tutor, Thomas Young 70
Elegy V. On the Approach of Spring 75
Elegy VI. To Charles Deodati 80
Elegy VII. 83
Epigrams. On the Inventor of Guns 87
To Leonora, singing at Rome 87
To the same 88
The Cottager and his Landlord. A Fable 88
To Christina, Queen of Sweden, with Cromwell's Picture 89
On the Death of the Vice-Chancellor, a Physician . . 89
On the Death of the Bishop of Ely 91
Nature unimpaired by Time 94
On the Platonic Idea as it was understood by Aristotle 97
To his Father 98
To Salsillus, a Roman Poet, much indisposed 104
To Giovanni Battista Manso, Marquis of Villa 106
On the Death of Damon 110
An Ode, addressed to Mr. John Rouse, Librarian of the University of Oxford 121

Sonnet — "Fair Lady! whose harmonious name" . . 125
Sonnet — "As on a hill-top rude, when closing day" . 126

Canzone — "They mock my toil — the nymphs and" . 126
Sonnet — To Charles Deodati 127
Sonnet — "Lady! it cannot be but that thine eyes" . 128
Sonnet — "Enamour'd, artless, young, on foreign ground" 128

Simile in Paradise Lost 129
Translation of Dryden's Epigram on Milton . . . 129

TRANSLATIONS FROM VINCENT BOURNE.

The Glowworm 130
The Jackdaw 131
The Cricket 133
The Parrot 134
The Thracian 136
Reciprocal Kindness the Primary Law of Nature . . 136
A Manual, more ancient than the Art of Printing . . 138
An Enigma — "A needle, small as small can be" . . 140
Sparrows self-domesticated in Trinity Coll., Cambridge 141
Familiarity dangerous 142
Invitation to the Redbreast 143
Strada's Nightingale 144
Ode on the Death of a Lady, who lived 100 Years . . 145
The Cause won 147
The Silkworm 147
The Innocent Thief 148
Denner's Old Woman 150
The Tears of a Painter 151
The Maze 152
No Sorrow peculiar to the Sufferer 153
The Snail 153
The Cantab 154
On the Picture of a sleeping Child 155

MINOR POEMS.

Verses written at Bath, on finding the Heel of a Shoe . 156
An Ode, on reading Richardson's History of Sir Charles Grandison 158

An Epistle to Robert Lloyd, Esq. 159
A Tale, founded on a Fact, which happened in Jan., 1779 163
To the Rev. Mr. Newton, on his return from Ramsgate 165
Love abused 165
A Poetical Epistle to Lady Austen 166
The Colubriad 170
On the Loss of the Royal George 172
In Submersionem Navigii, cui Georgius Regale Nomen inditum 173
Song. On Peace 175
Song — "When all within is peace" 175
The Valediction 177
In Brevitatem Vitæ Spatii Hominibus concessi . . . 180
On the Shortness of Human Life 181
Epitaph on Dr. Johnson 182
To Miss C——, on her Birthday 182
Gratitude 183
Lines composed for a Memorial of Ashley Cowper, Esq. 185
On the Queen's Visit to London 186
The Cock-fighter's Garland 189
To Warren Hastings, Esq. 192
Verses to the Memory of Dr. Lloyd 193
The same in English 194
To Mrs. Throckmorton 195
To the immortal Memory of the Halibut, on which I dined 196
Inscription for a Stone 197
Another 198
To Mrs. King 198
Translation of an Epigram of Homer 200
In Memory of the late John Thornton, Esq. 201
The Four Ages 203
The Retired Cat 205
The Judgment of the Poets 209
Yardley Oak 211
To the Nightingale 217
Lines written in an Album of Miss More's 218
Sonnet to William Wilberforce, Esq. 218
Epigram—"To purify their wine some people bleed" . 219
To Dr. Austin, of Cecil Street, London 219

Sonnet to George Romney, Esq. 220
Mary and John 220
Epitaph on Mr. Chester, of Chicheley 221
To my Cousin, Anne Bodham 221
Inscription for a Hermitage in the Author's Garden . . 222
To Mrs. Unwin 222
To John Johnson, on his Presenting me with an Antique Bust of Homer 223
To a Young Friend 223
A Tale 224
On a Spaniel, called Beau, killing a young Bird . . . 227
Beau's Reply 228
To William Hayley, Esq. 229
Answer to Stanzas addressed to Lady Hesketh, by Miss Catharine Fanshawe 230
On Flaxman's Penelope 330
To the Spanish Admiral Count Gravina 231
To Mary 231
Montes Glaciales, in Oceano Germanico natantes . . 233
On the Ice Islands, seen floating in the German Ocean 235
The Castaway 237
The Salad, by Virgil 240
To Sir Joshua Reynolds 245
On the Author of Letters on Literature 247
Stanzas on the late Indecent Liberties taken with the Remains of Milton. Anno 1790 248
To the Rev. William Bull 249
Monumental Inscription to William Northcot 252
Translation 252
Psalm cxxxvii 253
In a Letter to C. P., Esq. 254
In a Letter to the Same 254
Song 255
An Attempt at the Manner of Waller 256
A Song 257
A Song 258
Upon a Venerable Rival 259
The Certainty of Death 260
Of Himself 261

An Apology 262
"Delia, the unkindest girl on earth" 263
"This evening, Delia, you and I" 264
Written in a Quarrel 265
The Symptoms of Love 266
"See where the Thames, the purest stream" 267
"How blessed the youth whom fate ordains" . . . 269
"Bid adieu, my sad heart, bid adieu to thy peace!" . 270
Written after leaving her at New Burns 271
To Delia 273
R. S. S. 275
Written in a fit of Illness 277
To Delia 278
Disappointment 280
Ode 281
An Ode 283
Lines written under the Influence of Delirium . . . 286
Anti-Thelyphthora 287
On the High Price of Fish 294
To Mrs. Newton 295
Verses printed by himself on a Flood at Olney . . . 296
The Distressed Travellers; or, Labour in Vain . . . 297
Sweet Meat has Sour Sauce; or, The Slave-Trade in the Dumps 300
Motto for a Clock 302
On the Receipt of a Hamper 303
On the Neglect of Homer 303
Inscription for a Moss-House in the Shrubbery at Weston 303
On the Benefit received by His Majesty from Sea-Bathing in the Year 1789 304
Addressed to Miss Macartney on Reading the Prayer for Indifference 304
From a Letter to the Rev. Mr. Newton 308
The Flatting Mill 309
Epitaph on a Free but Tame Redbreast 310
Sonnet addressed to William Hayley, Esq. 311
An Epitaph 312
On receiving Hayley's Picture 313
On a Plant of Virgin's Bower 313

On receiving Heyne's Virgil from Mr. Hayley, . . 314
Epitaph on Mrs. M. Higgins, of Weston 315
A Riddle 315
Answer. From the Gentleman's Magazine, vol. lxxvi. p. 1224 315
On a Mistake in the Translation of Homer 316
In Seditionem horrendam, corruptelis Gallicis, ut fertur, Londini nuper exortam 316
Translation 317

TRANSLATIONS OF GREEK VERSES.

From the Greek of Julianus 317
On the same by Palaadas 317
An Epitaph 318
Another 318
Another 319
Another 319
By Callimachus 319
On Miltiades 319
On an Infant 320
By Heraclides 320
On the Reed 320
To Health 321
On Invalids 321
On the Astrologers 322
On an Old Woman 322
On Flatterers 322
On a True Friend 322
On the Swallow 323
On late acquired Wealth 323
On a Bath, by Plato 323
On a Fowler, by Isiodorus 324
On Niobe 324
On a Good Man 324
On a Miser 225
Another 325
Another 325
On Female Inconstancy 326

On the Grasshopper 326
On Hermocratia 327
From Menander 327
On Pallas bathing, from a Hymn of Callimachus . . 328
To Demosthenes 329
On a similar Character 329
On an Ugly Fellow 330
On a Battered Beauty 330
On a Thief 330
On Pedigree 331
On Envy 331
By Moschus 332
By Philemon 333

EPIGRAMS TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN OF OWEN.

On one Ignorant and Arrogant 333
Prudent Simplicity 333
To a Friend in Distress 334
"When little more than boy in age" 334
Retaliation 334
Sunset and Sunrise 334

TRANSLATIONS FROM THE FABLES OF GAY.

Lepus multis Amicus 334
Avarus et Plutus 337
Papilio et Limax 338

Translation from Virgil, Æneid, Book VIII. Line 18 . 339
Ovid Trist. Lib. V. Eleg. XII. 353
The Fifth Satire of the First Book of Horace . . . 356
The Ninth Satire of the First Book of Horace . . . 363
Hor. Lib. I. Ode IX. 370
Hor. Lib. I. Ode XXXVIII. 370
Hor. Lib. I. Ode XXXVIII. 371
Hor. Lib. II. Ode X. 371
A Reflection on the Foregoing Ode 373
Hor. Lib. II. Ode XVI. 373

Tirocinium; or, a Review of Schools 375

Olney Hymns.

I. Walking with God 409
II. Jehovah-Jireh. The Lord will provide . . 410
III. Jehovah-Rophi. I am the Lord that healeth thee 411
IV. Jehovah-Nissi. The Lord my Banner . . . 412
V. Jehovah-Shalom. The Lord send Peace . . 413
VI. Wisdom 414
VII. Vanity of the World 415
VIII. O Lord, I will praise thee 416
IX. The Contrite Heart 417
X. The Future Peace and Glory of the Church 418
XI. Jehovah our Righteousness 419
XII. Ephraim repenting 420
XIII. The Covenant 421
XIV. Jehovah-Shammah 422
XV. Praise for the Fountain opened 423
XVI. The Sower 424
XVII. The House of Prayer 425
XVIII. Lovest thou me? 426
XIX. Contentment 427
XX. Old Testament Gospel 428
XXI. Sardis 430
XXII. Prayer for a Blessing 431
XXIII. Pleading for and with Youth 432
XXIV. Prayer for Children 433
XXV. Jehovah Jesus 434
XXVI. On opening a Place for Social Prayer . . . 435
XXVII. Welcome to the Table 436
XXVIII. Jesus hasting to Supper 436
XXIX. Exhortation to Prayer 437
XXX. The Light and Glory of the Word 438
XXXI. On the Death of a Minister 439
XXXII. The Shining Light 440
XXXIII. Seeking the Beloved 441
XXXIV. The Waiting Soul 442
XXXV. Light shining out of Darkness 443

XXXVI. Welcome Cross 444
XXXVII. Afflictions sanctified by the Word 445
XXXVIII. Temptation 446
XXXIX. Looking upwards in a Storm 446
XL. The Valley of the Shadow of Death . . . 447
XLI. Peace after a Storm 448
XLII. Mourning and Longing 449
XLIII. Self-Acquaintance 450
XLIV. Prayer for Patience 451
XLV. Submission 452
XLVI. The Happy Change 453
XLVII. Retirement 454
XLVIII. The Hidden Life 455
XLIX. Joy and Peace in Believing 456
L. True Pleasures 458
LI. The Christian 459
LII. Lively Hope and Gracious Fear 460
LIII. For the Poor 461
LIV. My Soul thirsteth for God 461
LV. Love constraining to Obedience 462
LVI. The Heart healed and changed by Mercy . . 463
LVII. Hatred of Sin 464
LVIII. The New Convert 465
LIX. True and False Comforts 466
LX. A Living and a Dead Faith 467
LXI. Abuse of the Gospel 468
LXII. The Narrow Way 469
LXIII. Dependence 470
LXIV. Not of Works 471
LXV. Praise for Faith 472
LXVI. Grace and Providence 472
LXVII. I will praise the Lord at all Times 473
LXVIII. Longing to be with Christ 474

To the Reverend Mr. Newton 476
Catharina: Addressed to Miss Stapleton 477
Catharina: Part II. On her Marriage to George Courtenay, Esq. 479
Epitaph on Fop: a Dog belonging to Lady Throckmorton 481

The Moralizer Corrected 481
The Faithful Bird 483
The Needless Alarm 485
Boadicea 490
Heroism 492
On the Receipt of my Mother's Picture out of Norfolk 495
Friendship 499, 508
On a Mischievous Bull, which the Owner of him sold at the Author's instance 515
Annus Memorabilis, 1789. Written in Commemoration of his Majesty's happy Recovery 516
Hymn for the Use of the Sunday School at Olney . . 518
Stanzas subjoined to a Bill of Mortality for the year 1787 520
The same for 1788 522
The same for 1789 524
The same for 1790 526
The same for 1792 528
The same for 1793 530
On a Goldfinch, starved to Death in his Cage 532
The Pineapple and the Bee 533
The Lily and the Rose 534
Idem Latine Redditum 535
The Poplar Field 536
Idem Latine Redditum 538
Votum 539
Translation of Prior's Chloe and Euphelia 540
Inscription for the Tomb of Mr. Hamilton 541
Epitaph on a Hare 541
Epitaphium Alterum 543
Account of the Author's Treatment of his Hares . . 544

TRANSLATIONS FROM THE FRENCH OF MADAME DE LA MOTHE GUION.

THE NATIVITY.

'Tis folly all—let me no more be told
Of Parian porticos, and roofs of gold;
Delightful views of nature, dress'd by art,
Enchant no longer this indifferent heart;
The Lord of all things, in his humble birth,
Makes mean the proud magnificence of earth;
The straw, the manger, and the mouldering wall,
Eclipse its lustre; and I scorn it all.

Canals, and fountains, and delicious vales,
Green slopes and plains, whose plenty never fails,
Deep rooted groves, whose heads sublimely rise,
Earth-born, and yet ambitious of the skies;
The abundant foliage of whose gloomy shades,
Vainly the sun in all its power invades;
Where warbled airs of sprightly birds resound,
Whose verdure lives while Winter scowls around;
Rocks, lofty mountains, caverns dark and deep,
And torrents raving down the rugged steep;
Smooth downs, whose fragrant herbs the spirits cheer;
Meads crown'd with flowers; streams musical and clear,

Whose silver waters, and whose murmurs, join
Their artless charms, to make the scene divine;
The fruitful vineyard, and the furrow'd plain,
That seems a rolling sea of golden grain:
All, all have lost the charms they once possess'd:
An infant God reigns sovereign in my breast;
From Bethlehem's bosom I no more will rove;
There dwells the Saviour, and there rests my love.

Ye mightier rivers, that, with sounding force,
Urge down the valleys your impetuous course!
Winds, clouds, and lightnings! and, ye waves, whose heads,
Curl'd into monstrous forms, the seaman dreads!
Horrid abyss, where all experience fails,
Spread with the wreck of planks and shatter'd sails;
On whose broad back grim Death triumphant rides,
While havoc floats on all thy swelling tides,
Thy shores a scene of ruin, strew'd around
With vessels bulged, and bodies of the drown'd!

Ye fish, that sport beneath the boundless waves,
And rest, secure from man, in rocky caves;
Swift-darting sharks, and whales of hideous size,
Whom all the aquatic world with terror eyes!
Had I but faith immovable and true,
I might defy the fiercest storm, like you:
The world, a more disturb'd and boisterous sea,
When Jesus shows a smile, affrights not me;
He hides me, and in vain the billows roar,
Break harmless at my feet, and leave the shore.

Thou azure vault, where through the gloom of night,
Thick sown, we see such countless worlds of light!
Thou moon, whose car encompassing the skies,
Restores lost nature to our wondering eyes;
Again retiring, when the brighter sun
Begins the course he seems in haste to run!
Behold him where he shines! His rapid rays,
Themselves unmeasured, measure all our days;
Nothing impedes the race he would pursue,
Nothing escapes his penetrating view,
A thousand lands confess his quickening heat,
And all he cheers are fruitful, fair, and sweet.
Far from enjoying what these scenes disclose,
I feel the thorn, alas! but miss the rose:
Too well I know this aching heart requires
More solid good to fill its vast desires;
In vain they represent his matchless might,
Who call'd them out of deep primeval night;
Their form and beauty but augment my woe:
I seek the Giver of those charms they show:
Nor, Him beside, throughout the world he made,
Lives there in whom I trust for cure or aid.
Infinite God, thou great unrivalled ONE!
Whose glory makes a blot of yonder sun;
Compared with thine, how dim his beauty seems,
How quench'd the radiance of his golden beams!
Thou art my bliss, the light by which I move;
In thee alone dwells all that I can love;
All darkness flies when thou art pleased to appear,

A sudden spring renews the fading year;
Where'er I turn I see thy power and grace,
The watchful guardians of our heedless race;
Thy various creatures in one strain agree,
All, in all times and places, speak of thee;
E'en I, with trembling heart and stammering tongue,
Attempt thy praise, and join the general song.

Almighty Former of this wondrous plan,
Faintly reflected in thine image, man—
Holy and just—the greatness of whose name
Fills and supports this universal frame,
Diffused throughout the infinitude of space,
Who art thyself thine own vast dwelling place;
Soul of our soul, whom yet no sense of ours
Discerns, eluding our most active powers;
Encircling shades attend thine awful throne,
That veil thy face, and keep thee still unknown;
Unknown, though dwelling in our inmost part,
Lord of the thoughts, and Sovereign of the heart.

Repeat the charming truth, that never tires,
No God is like the God my soul desires;
He at whose voice heaven trembles, even He,
Great as he is, knows how to stoop to me—
Lo! there he lies—that smiling infant said,
"Heaven, earth, and sea, exist!"—and they obey'd.
E'en He, whose being swells beyond the skies,
Is born of woman, lives, and mourns, and dies;
Eternal and immortal, seems to cast
That glory from his brows, and breathes his last.

Trivial and vain the works that man has wrought,
How do they shrink, and vanish at the thought!
Sweet solitude, and scene of my repose!
This rustic sight assuages all my woes—
That crib contains the Lord, whom I adore;
And earth's a shade, that I pursue no more.
He is my firm support, my rock, my tower,
I dwell secure beneath his sheltering power,
And hold this mean retreat for ever dear,
For all I love, my soul's delight, is here.
I see the Almighty swathed in infant bands,
Tied helpless down the thunder-bearer's hands!
And, in this shed that mystery discern,
Which faith and love, and they alone, can learn.
Ye tempests, spare the slumbers of your Lord!
Ye zephyrs, all your whisper'd sweets afford!
Confess the God that guides the rolling year;
Heaven, do him homage; and thou, earth, revere!
Ye shepherds, sages, monarchs, hither bring
Your hearts an offering, and adore your King!
Pure be those hearts, and rich in faith and love;
Join in his praise, the harmonious world above;
To Bethlehem haste, rejoice in his repose,
And praise him there for all that he bestows!
Man, busy man, alas, can ill afford
To obey the summons, and attend the Lord;
Perverted reason revels and runs wild,
By glittering shows of pomp and wealth beguil'd;
And, blind to genuine excellence and grace,
Finds not her author in so mean a place.

Ye unbelieving! learn a wiser part,
Distrust your erring sense, and search your heart
There soon ye shall perceive a kindling flame
Glow for that infant God, from whom it came;
Resist not, quench not, that divine desire,
Melt all your adamant in heavenly fire!

Not so will I requite thee, gentle Love!
Yielding and soft this heart shall ever prove;
And every heart beneath thy power should fall,
Glad to submit, could mine contain them all
But I am poor, oblation I have none,
None for a Saviour, but himself alone:
Whate'er I render thee, from thee it came:
And, if I give my body to the flame,
My patience, love, and energy divine
Of heart, and soul, and spirit, all are thine.
Ah, vain attempt to expunge the mighty score!
The more I pay, I owe thee still the more.

Upon my meanness, poverty, and guilt,
The trophy of thy glory shall be built;
My self-disdain shall be the unshaken base,
And my deformity its fairest grace;
For destitute of good, and rich in ill,
Must be my state and my description still.

And do I grieve at such an humbling lot?
Nay, but I cherish and enjoy the thought—
Vain pageantry and pomp of earth, adieu!
I have no wish, no memory for you;
The more I feel my misery, I adore
The sacred inmate of my soul the more;

Rich in his love, I feel my noblest pride
Spring from the sense of having nought beside.
In Thee I find wealth, comfort, virtue, might;
My wanderings prove thy wisdom infinite;
All that I have I give thee; and then see
All contrarieties unite in thee;
For thou hast join'd them, taking up our woe,
And pouring out thy bliss on worms below,
By filling with thy grace and love divine
A gulf of evil in this heart of mine.
This is, indeed, to bid the valleys rise,
And the hills sink—'tis matching earth and skies;
I feel my weakness, thank thee, and deplore
An aching heart, that throbs to thank thee more
The more I love thee, I the more reprove
A soul so lifeless, and so slow to love;
Till, on a deluge of thy mercy tos'd,
I plunge into that sea, and there am lost.

GOD NEITHER KNOWN NOR LOVED BY THE WORLD.

Ye linnets, let us try, beneath this grove,
Which shall be loudest in our Maker's praise!
In quest of some forlorn retreat I rove,
For all the world is blind, and wanders from his ways.

That God alone should prop the sinking soul,
Fills them with rage against his empire now:

I traverse earth in vain from pole to pole,
To seek one simple heart, set free from all below.

They speak of love, yet little feel its sway,
While in their bosoms many an idol lurks;
Their base desires, well satisfied, obey,
Leave the Creator's hand, and lean upon his works.

'Tis therefore I can dwell with man no more;
Your fellowship, ye warblers! suits me best:
Pure love has lost its price, though prized of yore,
Profaned by modern tongues, and slighted as a jest.

My God, who form'd you for his praise alone,
Beholds his purpose well fulfill'd in you;
Come, let us join the choir before his throne,
Partaking in his praise with spirits just and true!

Yes, I will always love; and, as I ought,
Tune to the praise of love my ceaseless voice;
Preferring love too vast for human thought,
In spite of erring men, who cavil at my choice.

Why have I not a thousand thousand hearts,
Lord of my soul! that they might all be thine?
If thou approve—the zeal thy smile imparts,
How should it ever fail! can such a fire decline?

Love, pure and holy, is a deathless fire;
Its object heavenly, it must ever blaze:
Eternal love a God must needs inspire, [praise.
When once he wins the heart, and fits it for his

Self-love dismiss'd—'tis then we live indeed—
In her embrace, death, only death is found:
Come, then, one noble effort, and succeed, [bound!
Cast off the chain of self with which thy soul is

Oh! I could cry, that all the world might hear,
Ye self-tormentors, love your God alone:
Let his unequalled excellence be dear, [own!
Dear to your inmost souls, and make him all your

They hear me not—alas! how fond to rove
In endless chase of folly's specious lure!
'Tis here alone, beneath this shady grove,
I taste the sweets of truth—here only am secure.

THE SWALLOW.

I AM fond of the swallow—I learn from her flight,
Had I skill to improve it, a lesson of love:
How seldom on earth do we see her alight!
She dwells in the skies, she is ever above.

It is on the wing that she takes her repose,
Suspended and poised in the regions of air,
'Tis not in our fields that her sustenance grows,
It is wing'd like herself, 'tis ethereal fare.

She comes in the spring, all the summer she stays,
And, dreading the cold, still follows the sun—
So, true to our Love, we should covet his rays,
And the place where he shines not, immediately
shun.

Our light should be love, and our nourishment prayer;
It is dangerous food that we find upon earth;
The fruit of this world is beset with a snare,
In itself it is hurtful, as vile in its birth.

'Tis rarely, if ever, she settles below,
And only when building a nest for her young;
Were it not for her brood, she would never bestow
A thought upon any thing filthy as dung.

Let us leave it ourselves ('tis a mortal abode),
To bask every moment in infinite Love;
Let us fly the dark winter, and follow the road
That leads to the dayspring appearing above.

THE TRIUMPH OF HEAVENLY LOVE DESIRED.

Ah! reign, wherever man is found,
My spouse, beloved and divine!
Then I am rich, and I abound,
When every human heart is thine.

A thousand sorrows pierce my soul,
To think that all are not thine own:
Ah! be adored from pole to pole;
Where is thy zeal? arise; be known!

All hearts are cold, in every place,
Yet earthly good with warmth pursue;
Dissolve them with a flash of grace,
Thaw these of ice, and give us new!

A FIGURATIVE DESCRIPTION OF THE PROCEDURE OF DIVINE LOVE,

IN BRINGING A SOUL TO THE POINT OF SELF-RENUNCIATION AND ABSOLUTE ACQUIESCENCE.

'Twas my purpose, on a day,
To embark, and sail away;
As I climb'd the vessel's side,
Love was sporting in the tide;
"Come," he said,—"ascend—make haste,
Launch into the boundless waste."

Many mariners were there,
Having each his separate care;
They that row'd us held their eyes
Fix'd upon the starry skies;
Others steer'd, or turn'd the sails
To receive the shifting gales.

Love, with power divine supplied,
Suddenly my courage tried;
In a moment it was night,
Ship and skies were out of sight
On the briny wave I lay,
Floating rushes all my stay.

Did I with resentment burn
At this unexpected turn?

Did I wish myself on shore,
Never to forsake it more?
No—"My soul," I cried "be still;
If I must be lost, I will."

Next he hasten'd to convey
Both my frail supports away;
Seized my rushes; bade the waves
Yawn into a thousand graves:
Down I went, and sunk as lead,
Ocean closing o'er my head.

Still, however, life was safe;
And I saw him turn and laugh:
"Friend," he cried, "adieu! lie low,
While the wintry storms shall blow;
When the spring has calm'd the main,
You shall rise and float again."

Soon I saw him, with dismay,
Spread his plumes, and soar away;
Now I mark his rapid flight;
Now he leaves my aching sight;
He is gone whom I adore,
'Tis in vain to seek him more.

How I trembled then and fear'd,
When my love had disappear'd!
"Wilt thou leave me thus," I cried,
"Whelm'd beneath the rolling tide?"
Vain attempt to reach his ear!
Love was gone, and would not hear.

Ah! return, and love me still;
See me subject to thy will;
Frown with wrath, or smile with grace,
Only let me see thy face!
Evil I have none to fear,
All is good, if thou art near.

Yet he leaves me—cruel fate!
Leaves me in my lost estate—
Have I sinn'd? Oh, say wherein;
Tell me; and forgive my sin;
King, and Lord, whom I adore,
Shall I see thy face no more?

But not angry; I resign,
Henceforth, all my will to thine:
I consent that thou depart,
Though thine absence breaks my heart;
Go, then, and for ever too;
All is right that thou wilt do.

This was just what Love intended,
He was now no more offended;
Soon as I became a child,
Love return'd to me and smiled:
Never strife shall more betide
'Twixt the bridegroom and his bride.

A CHILD OF GOD LONGING TO SEE HIM BELOVED.

THERE'S not an echo round me,
But I am glad should learn,
How pure a fire has found me—
The love with which I burn.
For none attends with pleasure
To what I would reveal;
They slight me out of measure,
And laugh at all I feel.

The rocks receive less proudly
The story of my flame;
When I approach, they loudly
Reverberate his name.
I speak to them of sadness,
And comforts at a stand;
They bid me look for gladness,
And better days at hand.

Far from all habitation,
I heard a happy sound;
Big with the consolation,
That I have often found;
I said "My lot is sorrow,
My grief has no alloy;"
The rocks replied—"To-morrow,
To-morrow brings thee joy."

These sweet and secret tidings,
What bliss it is to hear!
For, spite of all my chidings,
My weakness, and my fear,
No sooner I receive them,
Than I forget my pain,
And, happy to believe them,
I love as much again.

I fly to scenes romantic,
Where never men resort;
For in an age so frantic
Impiety is sport.
For riot and confusion
They barter things above;
Condemning, as delusion,
The joy of perfect love.

In this sequester'd corner,
None hears what I express;
Deliver'd from the scorner,
What peace do I possess!
Beneath the boughs reclining
Or roving o'er the wild,
I live as undesigning
And harmless as a child.

No troubles here surprise me,
I innocently play,
While Providence supplies me,
And guards me all the day:

My dear and kind defender
Preserves me safely here,
From men of pomp and splendour,
Who fill a child with fear.

ASPIRATIONS OF THE SOUL AFTER GOD.

My Spouse! in whose presence I live,
Sole object of all my desires,
Who know'st what a flame I conceive,
And canst easily double its fires;
How pleasant is all that I meet!
From fear of adversity free,
I find even sorrow made sweet;
Because 'tis assign'd me by thee.

Transported I see thee display
Thy riches and glory divine;
I have only my life to repay,
Take what I would gladly resign.
Thy will is the treasure I seek,
For thou art as faithful as strong;
There let me, obedient and meek,
Repose myself all the day long.

My spirit and faculties fail;
Oh finish what love has begun!
Destroy what is sinful and frail,
And dwell in the soul thou hast won!

Dear theme of my wonder and praise,
I cry, who is worthy as thou!
I can only be silent and gaze:
'Tis all that is left to me now.

Oh glory in which I am lost,
Too deep for the plummet of thought;
On an ocean of deity toss'd,
I am swallow'd, I sink into nought.
Yet, lost and absorb'd as I seem,
I chant to the praise of my King;
And, though overwhelm'd by the theme,
Am happy whenever I sing.

GRATITUDE AND LOVE TO GOD.

All are indebted much to thee,
But I far more than all,
From many a deadly snare set free,
And raised from many a fall.
Overwhelm me, from above,
Daily, with thy boundless love.

What bonds of gratitude I feel
No language can declare;
Beneath the oppressive weight I reel,
'Tis more than I can bear:
When shall I that blessing prove,
To return thee love for love?

Spirit of charity, dispense
  Thy grace to every heart;
Expel all other spirits thence,
  Drive self from every part;
Charity divine, draw nigh,
Break the chains in which we lie!

All selfish souls, whate'er they feign,
  Have still a slavish lot;
They boast of liberty in vain,
  Of love, and feel it not.
He whose bosom glows with thee,
He, and he alone, is free.

Oh blessedness, all bliss above,
  When thy pure fires prevail!
Love only teaches what is love;
  All other lessons fail:
We learn its name, but not its powers,
Experience only makes it ours.

HAPPY SOLITUDE—UNHAPPY MEN.

My heart is easy, and my burden light;
I smile, though sad, when thou art in my sight:
The more my woes in secret I deplore,
I taste thy goodness, and I love thee more.

There, while a solemn stillness reigns around,
Faith, love, and hope within my soul abound;
And, while the world suppose me lost in care,
The joys of angels, unperceived, I share.

Thy creatures wrong thee, O thou sovereign Good!
Thou art not loved, because not understood;
This grieves me most, that vain pursuits beguile
Ungrateful men, regardless of thy smile.

Frail beauty and false honour are adored;
While Thee they scorn, and trifle with thy word;
Pass, unconcern'd, a Saviour's sorrows by;
And hunt their ruin with a zeal to die.

LIVING WATER.

The fountain in its source
No drought of summer fears;
The farther it pursues its course,
The nobler it appears.

But shallow cisterns yield
A scanty short supply;
The morning sees them amply fill'd,
At evening they are dry.

TRUTH AND DIVINE LOVE REJECTED BY THE WORLD.

O love, of pure and heavenly birth!
O simple truth, scarce known on earth!
Whom men resist with stubborn will;
And, more perverse and daring still,

Smother and quench, with reasonings vain,
While error and deception reign,

Whence comes it, that, your power the same
As His on high, from whence you came,
Ye rarely find a listening ear,
Or heart that makes you welcome here?—
Because ye bring reproach and pain,
Where'er ye visit, in your train.

The world is proud, and cannot bear
The scorn and calumny ye share;
The praise of men the mark they mean,
They fly the place where ye are seen;
Pure love, with scandal in the rear,
Suits not the vain; it costs too dear.

Then, let the price be what it may,
Though poor, I am prepared to pay;
Come shame, come sorrow; spite of tears,
Weakness, and heart-oppressing fears;
One soul, at least, shall not repine,
To give you room; come, reign in mine!

DIVINE JUSTICE AMIABLE.

Thou hast no lightnings, O thou just!
Or I their force should know;
And, if thou strike me into dust,
My soul approves the blow.

The heart, that values less its ease
Than it adores thy ways,
In thine avenging anger sees
A subject of its praise.

Pleased I could lie, conceal'd and lost,
In shades of central night;
Not to avoid thy wrath, thou know'st,
But lest I grieve thy sight.

Smite me, O thou, whom I provoke!
And I will love thee still:
The well deserved and righteous stroke
Shall please me, though it kill.

Am I not worthy to sustain
The worst thou canst devise:
And dare I seek thy throne again,
And meet thy sacred eyes?

Far from afflicting, thou art kind;
And, in my saddest hours,
An unction of thy grace I find,
Pervading all my powers.

Alas! thou sparest me yet again;
And, when thy wrath should move,
Too gentle to endure my pain,
Thou soothest me with thy love.

I have no punishment to fear;
But, ah! that smile from thee
Imparts a pang far more severe
Than woe itself would be.

THE SOUL THAT LOVES GOD FINDS HIM EVERY WHERE.

Oh thou, by long experience tried,
Near whom no grief can long abide;
My love! how full of sweet content
I pass my years of banishment!

All scenes alike engaging prove
To souls impress'd with sacred love!
Where'er they dwell, they dwell in thee;
In heaven, in earth, or on the sea.

To me remains nor place nor time;
My country is in every clime;
I can be calm and free from care
On any shore, since God is there.

While place we seek, or place we shun,
The soul finds happiness in none;
But with a God to guide our way,
'Tis equal joy to go or stay.

Could I be cast where thou art not,
That were indeed a dreadful lot;
But regions none remote I call,
Secure of finding God in all.

My country, Lord, art thou alone;
Nor other can I claim or own;
The point where all my wishes meet;
My law, my love, life's only sweet!

I hold by nothing here below;
Appoint my journey, and I go;
Though pierced by scorn, oppress'd by pride,
I feel thee good—feel nought beside.

No frowns of men can hurtful prove
To souls on fire with heavenly love;
Though men and devils both condemn,
No gloomy days arise from them.

Ah then! to his embrace repair;
My soul, thou art no stranger there;
There love divine shall be thy guard,
And peace and safety thy reward.

THE TESTIMONY OF DIVINE ADOPTION.

How happy are the new-born race;
Partakers of adopting grace;
How pure the bliss they share!
Hid from the world and all its eyes,
Within their heart the blessing lies,
And conscience feels it there.

The moment we believe, 'tis ours;
And if we love with all our powers
The God from whom it came;
And if we serve with hearts sincere,
Tis still discernible and clear,
An undisputed claim.

But, ah! if foul and wilful sin
Stain and dishonour us within,
  Farewell the joy we knew;
Again the slaves of nature's sway,
In labyrinths of our own we stray,
  Without a guide or clue.

The chaste and pure, who fear to grieve
The gracious Spirit they receive,
  His work distinctly trace:
And, strong in undissembling love,
Boldly assert and clearly prove
  Their hearts his dwelling place.

Oh messenger of dear delight,
Whose voice dispels the deepest night,
  Sweet peace-proclaiming Dove!
With thee at hand, to soothe our pains,
No wish unsatisfied remains,
  No task but that of love.

'Tis love unites what sin divides;
The centre, where all bliss resides;
  To which the soul once brought,
Reclining on the first great Cause,
From his abounding sweetness draws
  Peace passing human thought.

Sorrow foregoes its nature there,
And life assumes a tranquil air,

Divested of its woes;
There sovereign goodness soothes the breast,
Till then incapable of rest,
In sacred sure repose.

DIVINE LOVE ENDURES NO RIVAL.

Love is the Lord whom I obey,
Whose will transported I perform;
The centre of my rest, my stay,
Love's all in all to me, myself a worm.

For uncreated charms I burn,
Oppress'd by slavish fear no more;
For one in whom I may discern,
E'en when he frowns, a sweetness I adore.

He little loves him who complains,
And finds him rigorous and severe;
His heart is sordid, and he feigns,
Though loud in boasting of a soul sincere.

Love causes grief, but 'tis to move
And stimulate the slumbering mind;
And he has never tasted love,
Who shuns a pang so graciously design'd.

Sweet is the cross, above all sweets,
To souls enamour'd with thy smiles;
The keenest woe life ever meets,
Love strips of all its terrors, and beguiles

'Tis just that God should not be dear
Where self engrosses all the thought,
And groans and murmurs make it clear,
Whatever else is loved, the Lord is not.

The love of thee flows just as much
As that of ebbing self subsides;
Our hearts, their scantiness is such,
Bear not the conflict of two rival tides.

Both cannot govern in one soul;
Then let self-love be dispossess'd;
The love of God deserves the whole,
And will not dwell with so despised a guest.

SELF-DIFFIDENCE.

Source of love, and light of day,
Tear me from myself away;
Every view and thought of mine
Cast into the mould of thine;
Teach, O teach this faithless heart
A consistent constant part;
Or, if it must live to grow
More rebellious, break it now!

Is it thus that I requite
Grace and goodness infinite?
Every trace of every boon,
Cancelled and erased so soon!

Can I grieve thee, whom I love;
Thee, in whom I live and move?
If my sorrow touch thee still,
Save me from so great an ill!

Oh! the oppressive, irksome weight
Felt in an uncertain state;
Comfort, peace, and rest, adieu,
Should I prove at last untrue!
Still I choose thee, follow still
Every notice of thy will;
But, unstable, strangely weak,
Still let slip the good I seek.

Self-confiding wretch, I thought
I could serve thee as I ought,
Win thee, and deserve to feel
All the love thou canst reveal;
Trusting self, a bruised reed,
Is to be deceived indeed:
Save me from this harm and loss,
Lest my gold turn all to dross!

Self is earthly—faith alone
Makes an unseen world our own;
Faith relinquish'd, how we roam,
Feel our way, and leave our home!
Spurious gems our hopes entice,
While we scorn the pearl of price;
And, preferring servants' pay,
Cast the children's bread away.

THE ACQUIESCENCE OF PURE LOVE.

Love! if thy destined sacrifice am I,
Come, slay thy victim, and prepare thy fires:
Plunged in thy depths of mercy, let me die
The death which every soul that lives desires!

I watch my hours, and see them fleet away;
The time is long that I have languish'd here;
Yet all my thoughts thy purposes obey,
With no reluctance, cheerful and sincere.

To me 'tis equal, whether love ordain
My life or death, appoint me pain or ease;
My soul perceives no real ill in pain;
In ease or health no real good she sees.

One good she covets, and that good alone,
To choose thy will, from selfish bias free;
And to prefer a cottage to a throne,
And grief to comfort, if it pleases thee.

That we should bear the cross is thy command,
Die to the world, and live to self no more;
Suffer, unmoved, beneath the rudest hand,
As pleased when shipwreck'd as when safe on shore.

REPOSE IN GOD.

Blest! who, far from all mankind,
This world's shadows left behind,
Hears from heaven a gentle strain
Whispering love, and loves again.

Blest! who, free from self-esteem,
Dives into the great Supreme,
All desire beside discards,
Joys inferior none regards.

Blest! who in thy bosom seeks
Rest that nothing earthly breaks,
Dead to self and worldly things,
Lost in thee, thou King of kings!

Ye that know my secret fire,
Softly speak and soon retire;
Favour my divine repose,
Spare the sleep a God bestows.

GLORY TO GOD ALONE.

Oh loved! but not enough—though dearer far
Than self and its most loved enjoyments are;
None duly loves thee, but who, nobly free
From sensual objects, finds his all in thee.

Glory of God! thou stranger here below,
Whom man nor knows, nor feels a wish to know;
Our faith and reason are both shock'd to find
Man in the post of honour—Thee behind.

Reason exclaims—"Let every creature fall,
Ashamed, abased, before the Lord of all;"
And faith, o'erwhelm'd with such a dazzling blaze,
Feebly describes the beauty she surveys.

Yet man, dim-sighted man, and rash as blind,
Deaf to the dictates of his better mind,
In frantic competition dares the skies,
And claims precedence of the only wise.

Oh lost in vanity, till once self-known;
Nothing is great, or good, but God alone;
When thou shalt stand before his awful face,
Then, at the last, thy pride shall know his place.

Glorious, Almighty, First, and without end!
When wilt thou melt the mountains and descend?
When wilt thou shoot abroad thy conquering rays,
And teach these atoms, thou hast made, thy praise?

Thy glory is the sweetest heaven I feel;
And, if I seek it with too fierce a zeal,
Thy love, triumphant o'er a selfish will,
Taught me the passion, and inspires it still.

My reason, all my faculties, unite,
To make thy glory their supreme delight;
Forbid it, fountain of my brightest days,
That I should rob thee, and usurp thy praise!

My soul! rest happy in thy low estate,
Nor hope, nor wish, to be esteem'd or great;
To take the impression of a will divine,
Be that thy glory, and those riches thine.

Confess him righteous in his just decrees,
Love what he loves, and let his pleasure please;
Die daily; from the touch of sin recede;
Then thou hast crown'd him, and he reigns indeed.

SELF-LOVE AND TRUTH INCOMPATIBLE.

From thorny wilds a monster came,
That fill'd my soul with fear and shame;
The birds, forgetful of their mirth,
Droop'd at the sight, and fell to earth;
When thus a sage address'd mine ear,
Himself unconscious of a fear.

"Whence all this terror and surprise,
Distracted looks, and streaming eyes?
Far from the world and its affairs,
The joy it boasts, the pain it shares,
Surrender, without guile or art,
To God, an undivided heart;
The savage form, so fear'd before,
Shall scare your trembling soul no more;
For loathsome as the sight may be,
'Tis but the love of self you see.
Fix all your love on God alone,
Choose but his will, and hate your own:

No fear shall in your path be found,
The dreary waste shall bloom around,
And you, through all your happy days,
Shall bless his name, and sing his praise."
Oh lovely solitude, how sweet
The silence of this calm retreat!
Here Truth, the fair whom I pursue,
Gives all her beauty to my view;
The simple, unadorn'd display
Charms every pain and fear away.
O Truth, whom millions proudly slight;
O Truth, my treasure and delight;
Accept this tribute to thy name,
And this poor heart from which it came!

THE LOVE OF GOD, THE END OF LIFE.

Since life in sorrow must be spent,
So be it—I am well content,
And meekly wait my last remove,
Seeking only growth in love.

No bliss I seek, but to fulfil
In life, in death, thy lovely will;
No succours in my woes I want,
Save what thou art pleased to grant.

Our days are number'd, let us spare
Our anxious hearts a needless care:
'Tis thine to number out our days;
Ours to give them to thy praise.

Love is our only business here,
Love, simple, constant, and sincere;
O blessed days, thy servants see!
Spent, O Lord! in pleasing thee.

LOVE FAITHFUL IN THE ABSENCE OF THE BELOVED.

In vain ye woo me to your harmless joys,
Ye pleasant bowers, remote from strife and noise;
Your shades, the witnesses of many a vow,
Breathed forth in happier days, are irksome now:
Denied that smile 'twas once my heaven to see,
Such scenes, such pleasures, are all past with me.

In vain he leaves me, I shall love him still;
And though I mourn, not murmur at his will;
I have no cause—an object all divine
Might well grow weary of a soul like mine;
Yet pity me, great God! forlorn, alone,
Heartless and hopeless, life and love all gone.

LOVE PURE AND FERVENT.

Jealous, and with love o'erflowing,
God demands a fervent heart;
Grace and bounty still bestowing,
Calls us to a grateful part.

Oh, then, with supreme affection
His paternal will regard!
If it cost us some dejection,
Every sigh has its reward.

Perfect love has power to soften
Cares that might our peace destroy,
Nay, does more—transforms them often,
Changing sorrow into joy.

Sovereign love appoints the measure,
And the number of our pains;
And is pleased when we find pleasure
In the trials he ordains.

THE ENTIRE SURRENDER.

Peace has unveil'd her smiling face,
And woos thy soul to her embrace,
Enjoy'd with ease, if thou refrain
From earthly love, else sought in vain;
She dwells with all who truth prefer,
But seeks not them who seek not her.

Yield to the Lord, with simple heart,
All that thou hast, and all thou art;
Renounce all strength but strength divine;
And peace shall be for ever thine:
Behold the path which I have trod,
My path, till I go home to God.

THE PERFECT SACRIFICE.

I PLACE an offering at thy shrine,
From taint and blemish clear,
Simple and pure in its design,
Of all that I hold dear.

I yield thee back thy gifts again,
Thy gifts which most I prize;
Desirous only to retain
The notice of thine eyes.

But if, by thine adored decree,
That blessing be denied;
Resign'd, and unreluctant, see
My every wish subside.

Thy will in all things I approve,
Exalted or cast down!
Thy will in every state I love,
And even in thy frown.

GOD HIDES HIS PEOPLE.

To lay the soul that loves him low,
Becomes the Only-wise:
To hide, beneath a veil of woe,
The children of the skies.

Man, though a worm, would yet be great;
Though feeble, would seem strong;
Assumes an independent state,
By sacrilege and wrong.

Strange the reverse, which, once abased,
The haughty creature proves!
He feels his soul a barren waste,
Nor dares affirm he loves.

Scorn'd by the thoughtless and the vain,
To God he presses near;
Superior to the world's disdain,
And happy in its sneer.

Oh welcome, in his heart he says,
Humility and shame!
Farewell the wish for human praise,
The music of a name!

But will not scandal mar the good
That I might else perform?
And can God work it, if he would,
By so despised a worm?

Ah, vainly anxious!—leave the Lord
To rule thee, and dispose;
Sweet is the mandate of his word,
And gracious all he does.

He draws from human littleness
His grandeur and renown;
And generous hearts with joy confess
The triumph all his own.

Down then with self-exalting thoughts;
Thy faith and hope employ,
To welcome all that he allots,
And suffer shame with joy.

No longer, then, thou wilt encroach
On his eternal right;
And he shall smile at thy approach,
And make thee his delight.

THE SECRETS OF DIVINE LOVE ARE TO BE KEPT.

Sun! stay thy course, this moment stay—
Suspend the o'erflowing tide of day,
Divulge not such a love as mine,
Ah! hide the mystery divine;
Lest man, who deems my glory shame,
Should learn the secret of my flame.

O Night! propitious to my views,
Thy sable awning wide diffuse;
Conceal alike my joy and pain,
Nor draw thy curtain back again,
Though morning, by the tears she shows,
Seems to participate my woes.

Ye Stars! whose faint and feeble fires
Express my languishing desires,
Whose slender beams pervade the skies
As silent as my secret sighs,
Those emanations of a soul,
That darts her fires beyond the Pole;

Your rays, that scarce assist the sight,
That pierce, but not displace the night,

That shine indeed, but nothing show
Of all those various scenes below,
Bring no disturbance, rather prove
Incentives to a sacred love.

Thou Moon! whose never-failing course
Bespeaks a providential force,
Go, tell the tidings of my flame
To him who calls the stars by name;
Whose absence kills, whose presence cheers;
Who blots, or brightens, all my years.

While, in the blue abyss of space,
Thine orb performs its rapid race;
Still whisper in his listening ears
The language of my sighs and tears;
Tell him, I seek him, far below,
Lost in a wilderness of woe.

Ye thought-composing, silent Hours,
Diffusing peace o'er all my powers;
Friends of the pensive! who conceal,
In darkest shades, the flames I feel;
To you I trust, and safely may,
The love that wastes my strength away.

In sylvan scenes, and caverns rude,
I taste the sweets of solitude;
Retired indeed, but not alone,
I share them with a Spouse unknown,
Who hides me here, from envious eyes,
From all intrusion and surprise.

Imbowering Shades, and Dens profound!
Where echo rolls the voice around;
Mountains! whose elevated heads,
A moist and misty veil o'erspreads:
Disclose a solitary bride
To him I love—to none beside.

Ye Rills! that, murmuring all the way,
Among the polish'd pebbles stray;
Creep silently along the ground,
Lest, drawn by that harmonious sound,
Some wanderer, whom I would not meet,
Should stumble on my loved retreat.

Enamel'd Meads, and Hillocks green,
And streams that water all the scene!
Ye Torrents, loud in distant ears!
Ye Fountains, that receive my tears!
Ah! still conceal, with caution due,
A charge I trust with none but you.

If, when my pain and grief increase,
I seem to enjoy the sweetest peace,
It is because I find so fair
The charming object of my care,
That I can sport and pleasure make
Of torment suffer'd for his sake.

Ye Meads and Groves, unconscious things!
Ye know not whence my pleasure springs;
Ye know not, and ye cannot know,
The source from which my sorrows flow:

The dear sole cause of all I feel,—
He knows, and understands them well.

Ye Deserts! where the wild beasts rove,
Scenes sacred to my hours of love;
Ye Forests! in whose shades I stray,
Benighted under burning day!
Ah! whisper not how blest am I,
Nor while I live, nor when I die.

Ye Lambs! who sport beneath these shades,
And bound along the mossy glades;
Be taught a salutary fear,
And cease to bleat when I am near:
The wolf may hear your harmless cry,
Whom ye should dread as much as I.

How calm, amid these scenes, my mind!
How perfect is the peace I find!
Oh hush, be still, my every part,
My tongue, my pulse, my beating heart!
That love, aspiring to its cause,
May suffer not a moment's pause.

Ye swift-finn'd nations, that abide
In seas, as fathomless as wide;
And, unsuspicious of a snare,
Pursue at large your pleasures there:
Poor sportive fools! how soon does man
Your heedless ignorance trepan!

Away! dive deep into the brine,
Where never yet sunk plummet line;

Trust me, the vast leviathan
Is merciful, compared with man;
Avoid his arts, forsake the beach,
And never play within his reach.

My soul her bondage ill endures;
I pant for liberty like yours;
I long for that immense profound,
That knows no bottom and no bound;
Lost in infinity, to prove
The incomprehensible of Love.

Ye Birds! that lessen as ye fly,
And vanish in the distant sky;
To whom yon airy waste belongs,
Resounding with your cheerful songs;
Haste to escape from human sight;
Fear less the vulture and the kite.

How blest and how secure am I,
When quitting earth, I soar on high;
When lost, like you I disappear,
And float in a sublimer sphere!
Whence falling, within human view,
I am ensnared, and caught like you.

Omniscient God, whose notice deigns
To try the heart and search the reins;
Compassionate the numerous woes,
I dare not, e'en to thee, disclose;
Oh, save me from the cruel hands
Of men, who fear not thy commands!

Love, all-subduing and divine,
Care for a creature truly thine;
Reign in a heart, disposed to own
No sovereign but thyself alone;
Cherish a bride who cannot rove,
Nor quit thee for a meaner love!

THE VICISSITUDES EXPERIENCED IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

I SUFFER fruitless anguish day by day,
Each moment, as it passes, marks my pain;
Scarce knowing whither, doubtfully I stray,
And see no end of all that I sustain.

The more I strive the more I am withstood;
Anxiety increasing every hour,
My spirit finds no rest, performs no good,
And nought remains of all my former power.

My peace of heart is fled, I know not where;
My happy hours, like shadows, pass'd away;
Their sweet remembrance doubles all my care,
Night darker seems, succeeding such a day.

Dear faded joys and impotent regret,
What profit is there in incessant tears?
Oh thou, whom once beheld, we ne'er forget,
Reveal thy love, and banish all my fears!

Alas! he flies me—treats me as his foe,
Views not my sorrows, hears not when I plead;
Woe such as mine, despised, neglected woe,
Unless it shortens life, is vain indeed.

Pierced with a thousand wounds, I yet survive;
My pangs are keen, but no complaint transpires;
And, while in terrors of thy wrath I live,
Hell seems to lose its less tremendous fires.

Has hell a pain I would not gladly bear,
So thy severe displeasure might subside?
Hopeless of ease, I seem already there,
My life extinguish'd, and yet death denied.

Is this the joy so promised—this the love,
The unchanging love, so sworn in better days?
Ah! dangerous glories! shown me, but to prove
How lovely thou, and I how rash to gaze.

Why did I see them? had I still remain'd
Untaught, still ignorant how fair thou art,
My humbler wishes I had soon obtain'd,
Nor known the torments of a doubting heart.

Deprived of all, yet feeling no desires,
Whence then, I cry, the pangs that I sustain?
Dubious and uninform'd, my soul inquires,
Ought she to cherish, or shake off her pain.

Suffering, I suffer not—sincerely love,
Yet feel no touch of that enlivening flame;
As chance inclines me, unconcern'd I move,
All times, and all events, to me the same.

I search my heart, and not a wish is there,
But burns with zeal that hated self may fall;
Such is the sad disquietude I share,
A sea of doubts, and self the source of all.

I ask not life, nor do I wish to die;
And, if thine hand accomplish not my cure,
I would not purchase, with a single sigh,
A free discharge from all that I endure.

I groan in chains, yet want not a release;
Am sick, and know not the distemper'd part;
And just as void of purpose as of peace;
Have neither plan, nor fear, nor hope, nor heart.

My claim to life, though sought with earnest care,
No light within me, or without me, shows;
Once I had faith, but now in self-despair
Find my chief cordial and my best repose.

My soul is a forgotten thing; she sinks,
Sinks and is lost, without a wish to rise;
Feels an indifference she abhors, and thinks
Her name erased for ever from the skies.

Language affords not my distress a name,—
Yet is it real, and no sickly dream;
'Tis love inflicts it; though to feel that flame
Is all I know of happiness supreme.

When Love departs, a chaos wide and vast,
And dark as hell, is open'd in the soul;
When Love returns, the gloomy scene is past,
No tempests shake her, and no fears control.

Then tell me why these ages of delay?
Oh Love, all excellent, once more appear;
Disperse the shades, and snatch me into day,
From this abyss of night, these floods of fear!

No—Love is angry, will not now endure
A sigh of mine, or suffer a complaint;
He smites me, wounds me, and withholds the cure;
Exhausts my powers, and leaves me sick and faint.

He wounds, and hides the hand that gave the blow;
He flies, he reappears, and wounds again—
Was ever heart that loved thee treated so?
Yet I adore thee, though it seem in vain.

And wilt thou leave me, whom, when lost and blind,
Thou didst distinguish, and vouchsafe to choose,
Before thy laws were written in my mind,
While yet the world had all my thoughts and views?

Now leave me? when enamour'd, of thy laws,
I make thy glory my supreme delight;
Now blot me from thy register, and cause
A faithful soul to perish from thy sight?

What can have caused the change which I deplore?
Is it to prove me, if my heart be true?
Permit me then, while prostrate I adore,
To draw, and place its picture in thy view.

'Tis thine without reserve, most simply thine;
So given to thee, that it is not my own;
A willing captive of thy grace divine;
And loves, and seeks thee, for thyself alone.

Pain cannot move it, danger cannot scare;
Pleasure and wealth, in its esteem, are dust;
It loves thee, e'en when least inclined to spare
Its tenderest feelings, and avows thee just.

'Tis all thine own; my spirit is so too,
An undivided offering at thy shrine;
It seeks thy glory with no double view,
Thy glory with no secret bent to mine.

Love, holy Love! and art thou not severe,
To slight me, thus devoted, and thus fix'd?
Mine is an everlasting ardour, clear
From all self-bias, generous and unmix'd.

But I am silent, seeing what I see—
And fear, with cause, that I am self-deceived;
Not e'en my faith is from suspicion free,
And, that I love, seems not to be believed.

Live thou, and reign for ever, glorious Lord!
My last, least offering, I present thee now—
Renounce me, leave me, and be still adored!
Slay me, my God, and I applaud the blow.

WATCHING UNTO GOD IN THE NIGHT SEASON.

Sleep at last has fled these eyes,
Nor do I regret his flight,
More alert my spirits rise,
And my heart is free and light.

Nature silent all around,
Not a single witness near;
God as soon as sought is found;
And the flame of love burns clear.

Interruption, all day long,
Checks the current of my joys;
Creatures press me with a throng,
And perplex me with their noise.

Undisturb'd I muse all night,
On the first Eternal Fair;
Nothing there obstructs delight,
Love is renovated there.

Life, with its perpetual stir,
Proves a foe to Love and me;
Fresh entanglements occur—
Comes the night and sets me free.

Never more, sweet sleep, suspend
My enjoyments, always new:
Leave me to possess my friend;
Other eyes and hearts subdue.

Hush the world, that I may wake
To the taste of pure delights;
Oh the pleasures I partake—
God, the partner of my nights!

David, for the self-same cause,
Night preferr'd to busy day:
Hearts whom heavenly beauty draws
Wish the glaring sun away.

Sleep, self-lovers, is for you—
Souls that love celestial know,
Fairer scenes by night can view
Than the sun could ever show.

ON THE SAME.

Season of my purest pleasure,
Sealer of observing eyes!
When, in larger, freer measure,
I can commune with the skies;
While, beneath thy shade extended,
Weary man forgets his woes;
I, my daily trouble ended,
Find, in watching, my repose.

Silence all around prevailing,
Nature hush'd in slumber sweet,
No rude noise mine ears assailing,
Now my God and I can meet:
Universal nature slumbers,
And my soul partakes the calm,
Breathes her ardour out in numbers,
Plaintive song or lofty psalm.

Now my passion, pure and holy,
Shines and burns without restraint;
Which the day's fatigue and folly
Cause to languish, dim and faint:

Charming hours of relaxation!
How I dread the ascending sun!
Surely, idle conversation
Is an evil, match'd by none.

Worldly prate and babble hurt me;
Unintelligible prove;
Neither teach me nor divert me;
I have ears for none but love.
Me they rude esteem, and foolish,
Hearing my absurd replies;
I have neither art's fine polish,
Nor the knowledge of the wise.

Simple souls, and unpolluted,
By conversing with the great,
Have a mind and taste, ill suited
To their dignity and state;
All their talking, reading, writing,
Are but talents misapplied;
Infants' prattle I delight in,
Nothing human choose beside.

'Tis the secret fear of sinning
Checks my tongue, or I should say,
When I see the night beginning,
I am glad of parting day;
Love this gentle admonition
Whispers soft within my breast;
"Choice befits not thy condition,
Acquiescence suits thee best."

Henceforth, the repose and pleasure
Night affords me I resign;
And thy will shall be the measure,
Wisdom infinite of mine:
Wishing is but inclination
Quarrelling with thy decrees;
Wayward nature finds the occasion—
'Tis her folly and disease.

Night, with its sublime enjoyments,
Now no longer will I choose;
Nor the day with its employments,
Irksome as they seem, refuse;
Lessons of a God's inspiring
Neither time nor place impedes;
From our wishing and desiring
Our unhappiness proceeds.

ON THE SAME.

Night! how I love thy silent shades,
My spirits they compose;
The bliss of heaven my soul pervades,
In spite of all my woes.

While sleep instils her poppy dews
In every slumbering eye,
I watch, to meditate and muse,
In blest tranquillity.

And when I feel a God immense
Familiarly impart,
With every proof he can dispense,
His favour to my heart;

My native meanness I lament,
Though most divinely fill'd
With all the ineffable content
That Deity can yield.

His purpose and his course he keeps;
Treads all my reasonings down;
Commands me out of nature's deeps,
And hides me in his own.

When in the dust, its proper place,
Our pride of heart we lay;
'Tis then a deluge of his grace
Bears all our sins away.

Thou whom I serve, and whose I am,
Whose influence from on high
Refines, and still refines my flame,
And makes my fetters fly.

How wretched is the creature's state
Who thwarts thy gracious power;
Crush'd under sin's enormous weight,
Increasing every hour!

The night, when pass'd entire with thee,
How luminous and clear!
Then sleep has no delights for me,
Lest thou shouldst disappear.

My Saviour! occupy me still
In this secure recess;
Let reason slumber if she will,
My joy shall not be less:

Let reason slumber out the night;
But if thou deign to make
My soul the abode of truth and light,
Ah, keep my heart awake!

THE JOY OF THE CROSS.

Long plunged in sorrow, I resign
My soul to that dear hand of thine,
Without reserve or fear;
That hand shall wipe my streaming eyes;
Or into smiles of glad surprise
Transform the falling tear.

My sole possession is thy love;
In earth beneath, or heaven above,
I have no other store;
And though with fervent suit I pray,
And importune thee night and day,
I ask thee nothing more.

My rapid hours pursue the course
Prescribed them by Love's sweetest force;
And I thy sovereign will,
Without a wish to escape my doom;
Though still a sufferer from the womb,
And doom'd to suffer still.

By thy command, where'er I stray,
Sorrow attends me all my way,
A never-failing friend;
And if my sufferings may augment
Thy praise, behold me well content—
Let sorrow still attend!

It costs me no regret, that she,
Who follow'd Christ, should follow me;
And though, where'er she goes,
Thorns spring spontaneous at her feet,
I love her, and extract a sweet
From all my bitter woes.

Adieu! ye vain delights of earth;
Insipid sports and childish mirth,
I taste no sweets in you;
Unknown delights are in the cross,
All joy beside to me is dross;
And Jesus thought so too.

The cross! Oh ravishment and bliss—
How grateful e'en its anguish is;
Its bitterness how sweet!
There every sense, and all the mind,
In all her faculties refined,
Tastes happiness complete.

Souls once enabled to disdain
Base sublunary joys, maintain
Their dignity secure;

The fever of desire is pass'd,
And love has all its genuine taste,
  Is delicate and pure.

Self-love no grace in sorrow sees,
Consults her own peculiar ease;
  'Tis all the bliss she knows:
But nobler aims true love employ;
In self-denial is her joy,
  In suffering her repose.

Sorrow and love go side by side;
Nor height nor depth can e'er divide
  Their heaven-appointed bands;
Those dear associates still are one,
Nor till the race of life is run
  Disjoin their wedded hands.

Jesus, avenger of our fall,
Thou faithful lover, above all
  The cross has ever borne!
Oh tell me,—life is in thy voice—
How much afflictions were thy choice,
  And sloth and ease thy scorn!

Thy choice and mine shall be the same,
Inspirer of that holy flame
  Which must for ever blaze!
To take the cross and follow thee,
Where love and duty lead, shall be
  My portion and my praise.

JOY IN MARTYRDOM.

SWEET tenants of this grove!
Who sing, without design,
A song of artless love,
In unison with mine:
These echoing shades return
Full many a note of ours,
That wise ones cannot learn,
With all their boasted powers.

O thou! whose sacred charms
These hearts so seldom love,
Although thy beauty warms
And blesses all above;
How slow are human things,
To choose their happiest lot;
All-glorious King of kings,
Say why we love thee not?

This heart, that cannot rest,
Shall thine for ever prove;
Though bleeding and distress'd,
Yet joyful in thy love:
'Tis happy, though it breaks
Beneath thy chastening hand;
And speechless, yet it speaks
What thou canst understand.

SIMPLE TRUST.

Still, still, without ceasing,
I feel it increasing,
This fervour of holy desire;
And often exclaim,
Let me die in the flame
Of a love that can never expire!

Had I words to explain
What she must sustain
Who dies to the world and its ways;
How joy and affright,
Distress and delight,
Alternately chequer her days.

Thou, sweetly severe!
I would make thee appear,
In all thou art pleased to award,
Not more in the sweet,
Than the bitter I meet,
My tender and merciful Lord.

This faith, in the dark
Pursuing its mark,
Through many sharp trials of love;
Is the sorrowful waste
That is to be pass'd
In the way to the Canaan above.

THE NECESSITY OF SELF-ABASEMENT.

Source of love, my brighter sun,
Thou alone my comfort art;
See, my race is almost run;
Hast thou left this trembling heart?

In my youth thy charming eyes
Drew me from the ways of men;
Then I drank unmingled joys;
Frown of thine saw never then.

Spouse of Christ was then my name;
And devoted all to thee.
Strangely jealous, I became
Jealous of this self in me.

Thee to love, and none beside,
Was my darling, sole employ;
While alternately I died,
Now of grief, and now of joy.

Through the dark and silent night
On thy radiant smiles I dwelt;
And to see the dawning light
Was the keenest pain I felt.

Thou my gracious teacher wert;
And thine eye, so close applied,
While it watch'd thy pupil's heart,
Seem'd to look at none beside.

Conscious of no evil drift,
This, I cried, is love indeed—
'Tis the giver, not the gift,
Whence the joys I feel proceed.

But soon humbled, and laid low,
Stript of all thou hast conferr'd,
Nothing left but sin and woe,
I preceived how I had err'd.

Oh, the vain conceit of man,
Dreaming of a good his own,
Arrogating all he can,
Though the Lord is good alone!

He the graces thou hast wrought
Makes subservient to his pride;
Ignorant, that one such thought
Passes all his sin beside.

Such his folly—proved, at last,
By the loss of that repose
Self-complacence cannot taste,
Only Love Divine bestows.

'Tis by this reproof severe,
And by this reproof alone,
His defects at last appear,
Man is to himself made known.

Learn, all Earth! that feeble man,
Sprung from this terrestrial clod,
Nothing is, and nothing can;
Life and power are all in God.

LOVE INCREASED BY SUFFERING.

"I LOVE the Lord," is still the strain
This heart delights to sing;
But I reply—your thoughts are vain,
Perhaps 'tis no such thing.

Before the power of love divine
Creation fades away;
Till only God is seen to shine
In all that we survey.

In gulfs of awful night we find
The God of our desires;
'Tis there he stamps the yielding mind,
And doubles all its fires.

Flames of encircling love invest,
And pierce it sweetly through;
'Tis fill'd with sacred joy, yet press'd
With sacred sorrow too.

Ah love! my heart is in the right—
Amidst a thousand woes,
To thee, its ever new delight,
And all its peace it owes.

Fresh causes of distress occur
Where'er I look or move;
The comforts I to all prefer
Are solitude and love.

Nor exile I nor prison fear;
Love makes my courage great;
I find a Saviour every where,
His grace in every state.

Nor castle walls, nor dungeons deep,
Exclude his quickening beams;
There I can sit, and sing, and weep,
And dwell on heavenly themes.

There sorrow, for his sake, is found
A joy beyond compare;
There no presumptuous thoughts abound,
No pride can enter there.

A Saviour doubles all my joys,
And sweetens all my pains,
His strength in my defence employs,
Consoles me and sustains.

I fear no ill, resent no wrong,
Nor feel a passion move,
When malice whets her slanderous tongue;
Such patience is in love.

SCENES FAVOURABLE TO MEDITATION.

Wilds horrid and dark with o'ershadowing trees,
Rocks that ivy and briers infold,
Scenes nature with dread and astonishment sees,
But I with a pleasure untold.

Though awfully silent, and shaggy, and rude,
I am charm'd with the peace ye afford,
Your shades are a temple where none will intrude,
The abode of my lover and Lord.

I am sick of thy splendour, O fountain of day,
And here I am hid from its beams,
Here safely contemplate a brighter display
Of the noblest and holiest of themes.

Ye forests, that yield me my sweetest repose,
Where stillness and solitude reign,
To you I securely and boldly disclose
The dear anguish of which I complain.

Here, sweetly forgetting and wholly forgot
By the world and its turbulent throng,
The birds and the streams lend me many a note
That aids meditation and song.

Here wandering in scenes that are sacred to night,
Love wears me and wastes me away,
And often the sun has spent much of his light
Ere yet I perceive it is day.

While a mantle of darkness envelopes the sphere,
My sorrows are sadly rehearsed,
To me the dark hours are all equally dear,
And the last is as sweet as the first.

Here I and the beasts of the desert agree,
Mankind are the wolves that I fear,
They grudge me my natural right to be free,
But nobody questions it here.

Though little is found in this dreary abode
That appetite wishes to find,
My spirit is soothed by the presence of God,
And appetite wholly resign'd.

Ye desolate scenes, to your solitude led,
My life I in praises employ,
And scarce know the source of the tears that I shed,
Proceed they from sorrow or joy.

There's nothing I seem to have skill to discern,
I feel out my way in the dark,
Love reigns in my bosom, I constantly burn,
Yet hardly distinguish the spark.

I live, yet I seem to myself to be dead,
Such a riddle is not to be found,
I am nourish'd without knowing how I am fed,
I have nothing, and yet I abound.

Oh love! who in darkness art pleased to abide,
Though dimly, yet surely I see
That these contrarieties only reside
In the soul that is chosen of thee.

Ah send me not back to the race of mankind,
Perversely by folly beguiled,
For where, in the crowds I have left, shall I find
The spirit and heart of a child.

Here let me, though fix'd in a desert, be free;
A little one whom they despise,
Though lost to the world, if in union with thee,
Shall be holy and happy and wise.

TRANSLATIONS
OF THE LATIN AND ITALIAN POEMS
OF MILTON.

ELEGY I.

TO CHARLES DEODATI.

At length, my friend, the far sent letters come,
Charged with thy kindness, to their destined home;
They come, at length, from Deva's Western side,
Where prone she seeks the salt Vergivian tide.
Trust me, my joy is great that thou shouldst be,
Though born of foreign race, yet born for me,
And that my sprightly friend, now free to roam,
Must seek again so soon his wonted home.
I well content, where Thames with influent tide
My native city laves, meantime reside,
Nor zeal nor duty now my steps impel
To reedy Cam, and my forbidden cell.
Nor aught of pleasure in those fields have I,
That to the musing bard all shade deny.
'Tis time that I a pedant's threats disdain,
And fly from wrongs my soul will ne'er sustain.
If peaceful days, in letter'd leisure spent
Beneath my father's roof, be banishment,
Then call me banish'd, I will ne'er refuse
A name expressive of the lot I choose.

I would that, exiled to the Pontic shore,
Rome's hapless bard had suffer'd nothing more.
He then had equal'd even Homer's lays,
And, Virgil! thou hadst won but second praise:
For here I woo the muse, with no control,
And here my books—my life—absorb me whole.
Here too I visit, or to smile or weep,
The winding theatre's majestic sweep;
The grave or gay colloquial scene recruits
My spirits, spent in learning's long pursuits;
Whether some senior shrew'd, or spendthrift heir,
Suitor, or soldier, now unarm'd, be there,
Or some coif'd brooder o'er a ten years' cause,
Thunder the Norman gibberish of the laws.
The lacquey, there, oft dupes the wary sire,
And, artful, speeds the enamour'd son's desire.
There, virgins oft, unconscious what they prove,
What love is know not, yet, unknowing, love.
Or, if impassion'd tragedy wield high
The bloody sceptre, give her locks to fly,
Wild as the winds, and roll her haggard eye,
I gaze, and grieve, still cherishing my grief.
At times, e'en bitter tears yield sweet relief,
As, when from bliss untasted torn away,
Some youth dies, hapless, on his bridal day;
Or when the ghost, sent back from shades below,
Fills the assassin's heart with vengeful woe;
When Troy, or Argos, the dire scene affords,
Or Creon's hall laments its guilty lords.
Nor always city-pent, or pent at home,

I dwell; but, when spring calls me forth to roam,
Expatiate in our proud suburban shades
Of branching elm that never sun pervades.
Here many a virgin troop I may descry,
Like stars of mildest influence, gliding by.
Oh forms divine! Oh looks that might inspire
E'en Jove himself, grown old, with young desire,
Oft have I gazed on gem-surpassing eyes,
Out-sparkling every star that gilds the skies:
Necks whiter than the ivory arm bestow'd
By Jove on Pelops, or the milky road!
Bright locks, love's golden snare! these falling low,
Those playing wanton o'er the graceful brow!
Cheeks, too, more winning sweet than after shower
Adonis turn'd to Flora's favourite flower!
Yield, heroines, yield, and ye who shared the em-
Of Jupiter in ancient times, give place! [brace
Give place, ye turban'd fair of Persia's coast!
And ye, not less renown'd, Assyria's boast!
Submit, ye nymphs of Greece! ye, once the bloom
Of Ilion! and all ye, of haughty Rome,
Who swept, of old, her theatres with trains
Redundant, and still live in classic strains!
To British damsels beauty's palm is due;
Aliens! to follow them is fame for you.
Oh city, founded by Dardanian hands,
Whose towering front the circling realm com-
mands,
Too blest abode! no loveliness we see
In all the earth, but it abounds in thee.

The virgin multitude that daily meets,
Radiant with gold and beauty, in thy streets,
Outnumbers all her train of starry fires
With which Diana gilds thy lofty spires.
Fame says that, wafted hither by her doves,
With all her host of quiver-bearing loves,
Venus, preferring Paphian scenes no more,
Has fix'd her empire on thy nobler shore.
But, lest the sightless boy enforce my stay,
I leave these happy walls while yet I may.
Immortal Moly shall secure my heart
From all the sorcery of Circæan art,
And I will e'en repass Cam's reedy pools
To face once more the warfare of the schools.
Meantime accept this trifle! rhymes though few,
Yet such as prove thy friend's remembrance true!

ELEGY II.

ON THE DEATH OF THE UNIVERSITY BEADLE At CAMBRIDGE.

Thee, whose refulgent staff and summons clear
Minerva's flock long time was wont to obey,
Although thyself a herald, famous here,
The last of heralds, Death, has snatch'd away.
He calls on all alike, nor even deigns
To spare the office that himself sustains.

Thy locks were whiter than the plumes display'd
By Leda's paramour in ancient time;
But thou wast worthy ne'er to have decay'd,
Or, Æson-like, to know a second prime.
Worthy, for whom some goddess should have won
New life, oft kneeling to Apollo's son.

Commission'd to convene with hasty call
The gowned tribes, how graceful wouldst thou stand!
So stood Cyllenius erst in Priam's hall,
Wing-footed messenger of Jove's command!
And so Eurybates, when he address'd
To Peleus' son, Atrides' proud behest.

Dread queen of sepulchres! whose rigorous laws
And watchful eyes run through the realms below,
Oh, oft too adverse to Minerva's cause!
Too often to the muse not less a foe!
Choose meaner marks, and with more equal aim
Pierce useless drones, earth's burthen, and its shame!

Flow, therefore, tears for him from every eye,
All ye disciples of the muses, weep!
Assembling all in robes of sable dye,
Around his bier lament his endless sleep!
And let complaining Elegy rehearse
In every school her sweetest, saddest verse.

ELEGY III.

ON THE DEATH OF THE BISHOP OF WINCHESTER.

SILENT I sat, dejected, and alone,
Making in thought the public woes my own,
When first arose the image in my breast
Of England's suffering by that scourge, the pest!
How Death, his funeral torch and scythe in hand,
Entering the lordliest mansions of the land,
Has laid the gem-illumined palace low,
And level'd tribes of nobles at a blow.
I next deplored the famed paternal pair,
Too soon to ashes turn'd and empty air!
The heroes next, whom snatch'd into the skies
All Belgia saw, and follow'd with her sighs;
But thee far most I mourn'd, regretted most,
Winton's chief shepherd, and her worthiest boast!
Pour'd out in tears I thus complaining said!
"Death, next in power to him who rules the dead!
Is it not enough that all the woodlands yield
To thy fell force, and every verdant field;
That lilies, at one noisome blast of thine,
And e'en the Cyprian queen's own roses pine;
That oaks themselves, although the running rill
Suckle their roots, must wither at thy will;
That all the winged nations, even those
Whose heaven-directed flight the future shows,

And all the beasts that in dark forests stray,
And all the herds of Proteus are thy prey.
Ah envious! arm'd with powers so unconfined!
Why stain thy hands with blood of human kind?
Why take delight, with darts that never roam,
To chase a heaven-born spirit from her home?

While thus I mourn'd, the star of evening stood,
Now newly risen above the western flood,
And Phœbus from his morning goal again
Had reach'd the gulfs of the Iberian main.
I wish'd repose, and, on my couch reclined,
Took early rest, to night and sleep resign'd:
When—Oh for words to paint what I beheld!
I seem'd to wander in a spacious field,
Where all the champaign glow'd with purple light,
Like that of sunrise on the mountain height;
Flowers over all the field, of every hue
That ever Iris wore, luxuriant grew.
Nor Chloris, with whom amorous zephyrs play,
E'er dress'd Alcinous' garden half so gay,
A silver current, like the Tagus, roll'd
O'er golden sands, but sands of purer gold;
With dewy airs Favonius fann'd the flowers,
With airs awaken'd under rosy bowers.
Such, poets feign, irradiate all o'er
The sun's abode on India's utmost shore.

While I that splendour, and the mingled shade
Of fruitful vines, with wonder fix'd survey'd,
At once, with looks that beam'd celestial grace,
The seer of Winton stood before my face.

His snowy vesture's hem descending low
His golden sandals swept, and pure as snow
New fallen shone the mitre on his brow.
Where'er he trod, a tremulous sweet sound
Of gladness shook the flowery scene around:
Attendant angels clap their starry wings,
The trumpet shakes the sky, all ether rings;
Each chants his welcome, folds him to his breast,
And thus a sweeter voice than all the rest:
"Ascend, my son! thy father's kingdom share!
My son! henceforth be freed from every care!"
So spake the voice, and at its tender close
With psaltery's sound the angelic band arose;
Then night retired, and, chased by dawning day,
The visionary bliss pass'd all away.
I mourn'd my banish'd sleep with fond concern;
Frequent to me may dreams like this return!

ELEGY IV.

TO HIS TUTOR THOMAS YOUNG,

CHAPLAIN TO THE ENGLISH FACTORY AT HAMBURGH.

Hence my epistle—skim the deep—fly o'er
Yon smooth expanse to the Teutonic shore!
Haste—lest a friend should grieve for thy delay—
And the gods grant that nothing thwart thy way!
I will myself invoke the king, who binds
In his Sicanian echoing vault, the winds,

With Doris and her nymphs, and all the throng
Of azure gods to speed thee safe along.
But rather, to ensure thy happier haste,
Ascend Medea's chariot, if thou mayst;
Or that whence young Triptolemus of yore
Descended, welcome on the Scythian shore.
The sands that line the German coast descried,
To opulent Hamburga turn aside!
So call'd, if legendary fame be true,
From Hama, whom a club-arm'd Cimbrian slew!
There lives, deep learn'd and primitively just,
A faithful steward of his Christian trust,
My friend, and favourite inmate of my heart,
That now is forc'd to want its better part!
What mountains now, and seas, alas! how wide!
From me this other, dearer self divide,
Dear as the sage renown'd for moral truth
To the prime spirit of the Attic youth!
Dear as the Stagyrite to Ammon's son,
His pupil, who disdain'd the world he won!
Nor so did Chiron, or so Phœnix shine
In young Achilles' eyes, as he in mine.
First led by him through sweet Aonian shade,
Each sacred haunt of Pindus I survey'd;
And favour'd by the muse, whom I implored,
Thrice on my lip the hallow'd stream I pour'd.
But thrice the sun's resplendent chariot roll'd
To Aries, has new tinged his fleece with gold,
And Chloris twice has dress'd the meadows gay,
And twice has summer parch'd their bloom away,

Since last delighted on his looks I hung,
Or my ear drank the music of his tongue:
Fly, therefore, and surpass the tempest's speed;
Aware thyself that there is urgent need!
Him, entering, thou shalt haply seated see
Beside his spouse, his infants on his knee;
Or turning, page by page, with studious look,
Some bulky father, or God's holy book;
Or ministering (which is his weightiest care)
To Christ's assembled flock their heavenly fare.
Give him, whatever his employment be,
Such gratulation as he claims from me!
And, with a downcast eye, and carriage meek,
Addressing him, forget not thus to speak: [tend
"If compass'd round with arms thou canst at-
To verse, verse greets thee from a distant friend.
Long due, and late, I left the English shore;
But make me welcome for that cause the more!
Such from Ulysses, his chaste wife to cheer,
The slow epistle came, though late, sincere.
But wherefore this? why palliate I the deed
For which the culprit's self could hardly plead?
Self-charged, and self-condemn'd, his proper part
He feels neglected, with an aching heart;
But thou forgive—delinquents, who confess,
And pray forgiveness, merit anger less;
From timid foes the lion turns away,
Nor yawns upon or rends a crouching prey,
E'en pike-wielding Thracians learn to spare,
Won by soft influence of a suppliant prayer;

And heaven's dread thunderbolt arrested stands
By a cheap victim and uplifted hands.
Long had he wish'd to write, but was withheld,
And writes at last, by love alone compell'd,
For fame, too often true, when she alarms,
Reports thy neighbouring fields a scene of arms;
Thy city against fierce besiegers barr'd,
And all the Saxon chiefs for fight prepared.
Enyo wastes thy country wide around,
And saturates with blood the tainted ground;
Mars rests contented in his Thrace no more,
But goads his steeds to fields of German gore,
The ever verdant olive fades and dies,
And peace, the trumpet-hating goddess, flies,
Flies from that earth which justice long had left,
And leaves the world of its last guard bereft."

Thus horror girds thee round. Meantime alone
Thou dwell'st, and helpless, in a soil unknown;
Poor, and receiving from a foreign hand
The aid denied thee in thy native land.
Oh, ruthless country, and unfeeling more
Than thy own billow-beaten chalky shore!
Leavest thou to foreign care the worthies given
By providence to guide thy steps to heaven?
His ministers, commission'd to proclaim
Eternal blessings in a Saviour's name!
Ah then most worthy, with a soul unfed,
In Stygian night to lie for ever dead!
So once the venerable Tishbite stray'd
An exiled fugitive from shade to shade,

When, flying Ahab and his fury wife,
In lone Arabian wilds he shelter'd life;
So from Philippa wander'd forth forlorn
Cilician Paul, with sounding scourges torn;
And Christ himself, so left, and trod no more
The thankless Gergesene's forbidden shore.

But thou take courage! strive against despair!
Quake not with dread, nor nourish anxious care!
Grim war indeed on every side appears,
And thou art menaced by a thousand spears;
Yet none shall drink thy blood, or shall offend
E'en the defenceless bosom of my friend.
For thee the Ægis of thy God shall hide,
Jehovah's self shall combat on thy side.
The same who vanquish'd under Sion's towers
At silent midnight all Assyria's powers,
The same who overthrew in ages past
Damascus' sons that laid Samaria waste!
Their king he fill'd and them with fatal fears
By mimic sounds of clarions in their ears,
Of hoofs, and wheels, and neighings from afar,
Of clashing armour, and the din of war.

Thou, therefore (as the most afflicted may),
Still hope, and triumph o'er thy evil day!
Look forth, expecting happier times to come,
And to enjoy, once more, thy native home!

ELEGY V.

ON THE APPROACH OF SPRING.

Time, never wandering from his annual round,
Bids zephyr breathe the spring, and thaw the ground;
Bleak winter flies, new verdure clothes the plain,
And earth assumes her transient youth again.
Dream I, or also to the spring belong
Increase of genius, and new powers of song?
Spring gives them, and, how strange soe'er it seems,
Impels me now to some harmonious themes.
Castalia's fountain, and the forked hill
By day, by night, my raptured fancy fill;
My bosom burns and heaves, I hear within
A sacred sound that prompts me to begin.
Lo! Phœbus comes, with his bright hair he blends
The radiant laurel wreath; Phœbus descends!
I mount, and undepress'd by cumbrous clay,
Through cloudy regions win my easy way;
Rapt through poetic shadowy haunts I fly:
The shrines all open to my dauntless eye,
My spirit searches all the realms of light,
And no Tartarean gulfs elude my sight.
But this ecstatic trance—this glorious storm
Of inspiration—what will it perform?

Spring claims the verse that with his influence
glows,
And shall be paid with what himself bestows.
Thou, veil'd with opening foliage, lead'st the throng
Of feather'd minstrels, Philomel! in song;
Let us, in concert, to the season sing,
Civic and sylvan heralds of the spring!
With notes triumphant spring's approach de-clare!
To spring, ye muses, annual tribute bear!
The orient left, and Ethiopia's plains,
The sun now northward turns his golden reins;
Night creeps not now; yet rules with gentle sway,
And drives her dusky horrors swift away;
Now less fatigued, on this ethereal plain
Boötes follows his celestial wain;
And now the radiant sentinels above,
Less numerous, watch around the courts of Jove,
For, with the night, force, ambush, slaughter fly,
And no gigantic guilt alarms the sky.
Now, haply says some shepherd, while he views,
Recumbent on a rock, the reddening dews,
This night, this, surely, Phœbus miss'd the fair,
Who stops his chariot by her amorous care.
Cynthia, delighted by the morning's glow,
Speeds to the woodland, and resumes her bow;
Resigns her beams, and, glad to disappear,
Blesses his aid, who shortens her career.
Come—Phœbus cries—Aurora, come—too late
Thou lingerest, slumbering, with thy wither'd mate;
Leave him, and to Hymettus' top repair!
Thy darling Cephalus expects thee there.

The goddess with a blush her love betrays,
But mounts, and, driving rapidly, obeys.
Earth now desires thee, Phœbus! and, to engage
Thy warm embrace, casts off the guise of age;
Desires thee, and deserves; for who so sweet
When her rich bosom courts thy genial heat?
Her breath imparts to every breeze that blows
Arabia's harvest and the Paphian rose.
Her lofty front she diadems around
With sacred pines, like Ops on Ida crown'd;
Her dewy locks, with various flowers new blown,
She interweaves, various, and all her own;
For Proserpine, in such a wreath attired,
Tænarian Dis himself with love inspired.
Fear not, lest, cold and coy, the nymph refuse!
Herself, with all her sighing zephyrs, sues;
Each courts thee, fanning soft his scented wing,
And all her groves with warbled wishes ring.
Nor, unendow'd and indigent, aspires
The amorous earth to engage thy warm desires,
But rich in balmy drugs, assists thy claim,
Divine physician! to that glorious name.
If splendid recompense, if gifts can move
Desire in thee (gifts often purchase love),
She offers all the wealth her mountains hide,
And all that rests beneath the boundless tide.
How oft, when headlong from the heavenly steep
She sees thee playing in the western deep,
How oft she cries—"Ah Phœbus, why repair
Thy wasted force, why seek refreshment there?

Can Tethys win thee? wherefore shouldst thou lave
A face so fair in her unpleasant wave?
Come, seek my green retreats, and rather choose
To cool thy tresses in my crystal dews.
The grassy turf shall yield thee sweeter rest;
Come, lay thy evening glories on my breast,
And breathing fresh, through many a humid rose,
Soft whispering airs shall lull thee to repose!
No fears I feel like Semele to die,
Nor let thy burning wheels approach too nigh,
For thou canst govern them, here therefore rest,
And lay thy evening glories on my breast!"
Thus breathes the wanton Earth her amorous flame,
And all her countless offspring feel the same;
For Cupid now through every region strays,
Brightening his faded fires with solar rays;
His new-strung bow sends forth a deadlier sound,
And his new-pointed shafts more deeply wound;
Nor Dian's self escapes him now untried,
Nor even Vesta at her altar side;
His mother too repairs her beauty's wane,
And seems sprung newly from the deep again.
Exulting youths the hymeneal sing,
With Hymen's name roofs, rocks, and valleys ring;
He, new attired, and by the season drest,
Proceeds, all fragrant, in his saffron vest.
Now many a golden-cinctured virgin roves
To taste the pleasures of the fields and groves,
All wish, and each alike, some favourite youth

Hers, in the bonds of hymeneal truth.
Now pipes the shepherd through his reeds again,
Nor Phillis wants a song that suits the strain;
With songs the seaman hails the starry sphere,
And dolphins rise from the abyss to hear:
Jove feels himself the season, sports again
With his fair spouse, and banquets all his train.
Now too the satyrs, in the dusk of eve, [weave,
Their mazy dance through flowery meadows
And neither god nor goat, but both in kind,
Silvanus, wreathed with cypress, skips behind.
The dryads leave their hollow sylvan cells
To roam the banks and solitary dells;
Pan riots now; and from his amorous chafe
Ceres and Cybele seem hardly safe,
And Faunus, all on fire to reach the prize,
In chase of some enticing oread flies;
She bounds before, but fears too swift a bound,
And hidden lies, but wishes to be found.
Our shades entice the immortals from above,
And some kind power presides o'er every grove;
And long, ye powers, o'er every grove preside,
For all is safe, and blest, where ye abide!
Return, O Jove! the age of gold restore—
Why choose to dwell where storms and thunder
roar?
At least thou, Phœbus! moderate thy speed!
Let not the vernal hours too swift proceed,
Command rough winter back, nor yield the pole
Too soon to night's encroaching, long control!

ELEGY VI.

TO CHARLES DEODATI,

Who, while he spent his Christmas in the country, sent the Author a poetical epistle, in which he requested that his verses, if not so good as usual, might be excused on account of the many feasts to which his friends invited him, and which would not allow him leisure to finish them as he wished.

With no rich viands overcharged, I send
Health, which perchance you want, my pamper'd friend.
But wherefore should thy muse tempt mine away
From what she loves, from darkness into day?
Art thou desirous to be told how well
I love thee, and in verse? verse cannot tell.
For verse has bounds, and must in measure move;
But neither bounds nor measure knows my love.
How pleasant, in thy lines described, appear
December's harmless sports, and rural cheer!
French spirits kindling with cerulean fires,
And all such gambols as the time inspires!
Think not that wine against good verse offends,
The Muse and Bacchus have been always friends,
Nor Phœbus blushes sometimes to be found
With ivy, rather than with laurel, crown'd.
The Nine themselves ofttimes have join'd the song,
And revels of the Bacchanalian throng;
Not even Ovid could in Scythian air

Sing sweetly—why? no vine would flourish there.
What in brief numbers sung Anacreon's muse?
Wine, and the rose that sparkling wine bedews.
Pindar with Bacchus glows—his every line
Breathes the rich fragrance of inspiring wine,
While, with loud crash o'erturn'd the chariot lies,
And brown with dust the fiery courser flies.
The Roman lyrist steep'd in wine his lays
So sweet in Glycera's and Chloe's praise.
Now too the plenteous feast and mantling bowl
Nourish the vigour of thy sprightly soul;
The flowing goblet makes thy numbers flow,
And casks not wine alone, but verse bestow.
Thus Phœbus favours, and the arts attend,
Whom Bacchus and whom Ceres both befriend.
What wonder, then, thy verses are so sweet,
In which these triple powers so kindly meet!
The lute now also sounds, with gold inwrought,
And touch'd with flying fingers nicely taught,
In tapestried halls, high roof'd, the sprightly lyre
Directs the dancers of the virgin choir.
If dull repletion fright the muse away,
Sights gay as these may more invite her stay;
And, trust me, while the ivory keys resound,
Fair damsels sport, and perfumes steam around,
Apollo's influence, like ethereal flame,
Shall animate, at once, thy glowing frame,
And all the Muse shall rush into thy breast,
By love and music's blended powers possest.
For numerous powers light elegy befriend,
Hear her sweet voice, and at her call attend;

Her, Bacchus, Ceres, Venus, all approve,
And, with his blushing mother, gentle Love.
Hence to such bards we grant the copious use
Of banquets, and the vine's delicious juice.
But they who demigods and heroes praise,
And feats perform'd in Jove's more youthful days,
Who now the counsels of high heaven explore,
Now shades that echo the Cerberean roar,
Simply let these, like him of Samos, live,
Let herbs to them a bloodless banquet give;
In beechen goblets let their beverage shine,
Cool from the crystal spring, their sober wine!
Their youth should pass in innocence secure
From stain licentious, and in manners pure,
Pure as the priest, when robed in white he stands,
The fresh lustration ready in his hands.
Thus Linus lived, and thus, as poets write,
Tiresias, wiser for his loss of sight;
Thus exiled Chalcas, thus the Bard of Thrace,
Melodious Tamar of the savage race;
Thus train'd by temperance, Homer led, of yore,
His chief of Ithaca from shore to shore,
Through magic Circe's monster-peopled reign,
And shoals insidious with the siren train;
And through the realms where grizzly spectres
dwell,
Whose tribes he fetter'd in a gory spell;
For these are sacred bards, and from above
Drink large infusions from the mind of Jove.
Wouldst thou (perhaps 'tis hardly worth thine
Wouldst thou be told my occupation here? [ear)

The promised King of peace employs my pen,
The eternal covenant made for guilty men,
The new-born Deity with infant cries
Filling the sordid hovel where he lies;
The hymning angels, and the herald star,
That led the wise, who sought him from afar,
And idols on their own unhallow'd shore
Dash'd, at his birth, to be revered no more.
This theme on reeds of Albion I rehearse:
The dawn of that blest day inspired the verse;
Verse that, reserved in secret, shall attend
Thy candid voice, my critic, and my friend!

ELEGY VII.

As yet a stranger to the gentle fires
That Amathusia's smiling queen inspires,
Not seldom I derided Cupid's darts,
And scorn'd his claim to rule all human hearts.
"Go, child," I said, "transfix the timorous dove
An easy conquest suits an infant love;
Enslave the sparrow, for such prize shall be
Sufficient triumph to a chief like thee!
Why aim thy idle arms at human kind?
Thy shafts prevail not 'gainst the noble mind."
The Cyprian heard, and kindling into ire,
(None kindles sooner) burn'd with double fire.
It was the spring, and newly risen day
Peep'd o'er the hamlets on the first of May;

My eyes, too tender for the blaze of light,
Still sought the shelter of retiring night,
When Love approach'd, in painted plumes array'd,
The insidious god his rattling darts betray'd,
Nor less his infant features, and the sly,
Sweet intimations of his threatening eye.
Such the Sigeian boy is seen above,
Filling the goblet for imperial Jove; [charms,
Such he on whom the nymphs bestow'd their
Hylas, who perish'd in a naiad's arms.
Angry he seem'd, yet graceful in his ire,
And added threats not destitute of fire.
"My power," he said, "by others' pain alone,
'Twere best to learn; now learn it by thy own!
With those who feel my power, that power attest!
And in thy anguish be my sway confest!
I vanquish'd Phœbus, though returning vain
From his new triumph o'er the Python slain,
And, when he thinks on Daphne, even he
Will yield the prize of archery to me.
A dart less true the Parthian horseman sped,
Behind him kill'd, and conquer'd as he fled:
Less true the expert Cydonian, and less true
The youth whose shaft his latent Procris slew.
Vanquish'd by me see huge Orion bend,
By me Alcides, and Alcides' friend.
At me should Jove himself a bolt design,
His bosom first should bleed transfix'd by mine.
But all thy doubts this shaft will best explain,
Nor shall it reach thee with a trivial pain.

Thy muse, vain youth! shall not thy peace ensure,
Nor Phœbus' serpent yield thy wound a cure."
He spoke, and, waving a bright shaft in air,
Sought the warm bosom of the Cyprian fair.
That thus a child should bluster in my ear,
Provoked my laughter more than moved my fear.
I shunn'd not, therefore, public haunts, but stray'd
Careless in city or suburban shade,
And, passing and repassing nymphs that moved
With grace divine, beheld where'er I roved.
Bright shone the vernal day with double blaze
As beauty gave new force to Phœbus' rays.
By no grave scruples check'd I freely eyed
The dangerous show, rash youth my only guide,
And many a look of many a fair unknown
Met full, unable to control my own.
But one I mark'd (then peace forsook my breast),
One—Oh how far superior to the rest!
What lovely features! such the Cyprian queen
Herself might wish, and Juno wish her mien.
The very nymph was she, whom, when I dared
His arrows, Love had even then prepared!
Nor was himself remote, nor unsupplied
With torch well trimm'd and quiver at his side;
Now to her lips he clung, her eyelids now,
Then settled on her cheeks, or on her brow;
And with a thousand wounds from every part
Pierced and transpierced my undefended heart.
A fever, new to me, of fierce desire
Now seized my soul, and I was all on fire;

But she, the while, whom only I adore,
Was gone, and vanish'd, to appear no more.
In silent sadness I pursue my way;
I pause, I turn, proceed, yet wish to stay,
And, while I follow her in thought, bemoan
With tears my soul's delight so quickly flown.
When Jove had hurl'd him to the Lemnian coast,
So Vulcan sorrow'd for Olympus lost,
And so Oeclides, sinking into night,
From the deep gulf look'd up to distant light.

Wretch that I am, what hopes for me remain,
Who cannot cease to love, yet love in vain?
Oh could I once, once more behold the fair,
Speak to her, tell her of the pangs I bear;
Perhaps she is not adamant; would show,
Perhaps, some pity at my tale of woe.
Oh inauspicious flame—'tis mine to prove
A matchless instance of disastrous love.
Ah, spare me, gentle power!—If such thou be,
Let not thy deeds and nature disagree.
Spare me, and I will worship at no shrine
With vow and sacrifice save only thine.
Now I revere thy fires, thy bow, thy darts:
Now own thee sovereign of all human hearts.
Remove! no—grant me still this raging woe!
Sweet is the wretchedness that lovers know:
But pierce hereafter (should I chance to see
One destined mine) at once both her and me.

Such were the trophies that, in earlier days,
By vanity seduced, I toil'd to raise;

Studious, yet indolent, and urged by youth,
That worst of teachers! from the ways of truth;
Till Learning taught me in his shady bower
To quit Love's servile yoke, and spurn his power.
Then, on a sudden, the fierce flame supprest,
A frost continual settled on my breast,
Whence Cupid fears his flames extinct to see,
And Venus dreads a Diomede in me.

EPIGRAMS.

ON THE INVENTOR OF GUNS.

Praise in old time the sage Prometheus won,
Who stole ethereal radiance from the sun;
But greater he, whose bold invention strove
To emulate the fiery bolts of Jove.

[The Poems on the subject of the Gunpowder Treason I have not translated, both because the matter of them is unpleasant, and because they are written with an asperity, which, however it might be warranted in Milton's day, would be extremely unseasonable now. C.]

TO LEONORA SINGING AT ROME.[1]

Another Leonora once inspired
Tasso, with fatal love to phrensy fired;

[1] I have translated only two of the three poetical compliments addressed to Leonora, as they appear to me far superior to what I have omitted. C.

But how much happier, lived he now, were he,
Pierced with whatever pangs for love of thee!
Since could he hear that heavenly voice of thine,
With Adriana's lute of sound divine,
Fiercer than Pentheus' though his eye might roll,
Or idiot apathy benumb his soul,
You still, with medicinal sounds might cheer
His senses wandering in a blind career;
And, sweetly breathing through his wounded
breast, [rest.
Charm, with soul-soothing song, his thoughts to

TO THE SAME.

Naples, too credulous, ah! boast no more
The sweet-voiced siren buried on thy shore,
That, when Parthenope deceased, she gave
Her sacred dust to a Chalcidic grave,
For still she lives, but has exchanged the hoarse
Pausilipo for Tiber's placid course,
Where, idol of all Rome, she now in chains
Of magic song both gods and men detains.

THE COTTAGER AND HIS LANDLORD

A FABLE.

A peasant to his lord paid yearly court,
Presenting pippins of so rich a sort
That he, displeased to have a part alone,
Removed the tree, that all might be his own.

The tree, too old to travel, though before
So fruitful, wither'd, and would yield no more.
The squire, perceiving all his labour void,
Cursed his own pains, so foolishly employ'd,
And, "Oh," he cried, "that I had lived content
With tribute, small indeed, but kindly meant!
My avarice has expensive proved to me,
Has cost me both my pippins and my tree."

TO CHRISTINA, QUEEN OF SWEDEN, WITH CROMWELL'S PICTURE.

Christina, maiden of heroic mien!
Star of the North! of northern stars the queen!
Behold what wrinkles I have earn'd, and how
The iron casque still chafes my veteran brow,
While following Fate's dark footsteps, I fulfil
The dictates of a hardy people's will.
But soften'd in thy sight my looks appear,
Not to all queens or kings alike severe.

ON THE DEATH OF THE VICE-CHANCELLOR A PHYSICIAN.

Learn, ye nations of the earth,
The condition of your birth,
Now be taught your feeble state!
Know, that all must yield to fate!

If the mournful rover, Death,
Say but once—"Resign your breath!"
Vainly of escape you dream,
You must pass the Stygian stream.

Could the stoutest overcome
Death's assault, and baffle doom,
Hercules had both withstood,
Undiseased by Nessus' blood.

Ne'er had Hector press'd the plain
By a trick of Pallas slain,
Nor the chief to Jove allied
By Achilles' phantom died.

Could enchantments life prolong,
Circe, saved by magic song,
Still had lived, and equal skill
Had preserved Medea still.

Dwelt in herbs and drugs a power
To avert man's destined hour,
Learn'd Machaon should have known
Doubtless to avert his own.

Chiron had survived the smart
Of the hydra-tainted dart,
And Jove's bolt had been, with ease,
Foil'd by Asclepiades.

Thou too, sage! of whom forlorn
Helicon and Cirrha mourn,
Still hadst fill'd thy princely place,
Regent of the gowned race:

Hadst advanced to higher fame
Still thy much ennobled name,
Nor in Charon's skiff explored
The Tartarean gulf abhorr'd.

But resentful Proserpine,
Jealous of thy skill divine,
Snapping short thy vital thread,
Thee too number'd with the dead.

Wise and good! untroubled be
The green turf that covers thee!
Thence, in gay profusion, grow
All the sweetest flowers that blow!

Pluto's consort bid thee rest!
Æacus pronounce thee blest!
To her home thy shade consign!
Make Elysium ever thine!

ON THE DEATH OF THE BISHOP OF ELY.

My lids with grief were tumid yet,
And still my sullied cheek was wet
With briny dews, profusely shed
For venerable Winton dead;
When fame, whose tales of saddest sound,
Alas! are ever truest found,
The news through all our cities spread
Of yet another mitred head

By ruthless fate to death consign'd,
Ely, the honour of his kind!
At once a storm of passion heaved
My boiling bosom, much I grieved;
But more I raged, at every breath
Devoting Death himself to death.
With less revenge did Naso teem
When hated Ibis was his theme;
With less Archilochus denied
The lovely Greek his promised bride.
But lo! while thus I execrate
Incensed the minister of fate,
Wondrous accents, soft, yet clear,
Wafted on the gale I hear.
"Ah, much deluded! lay aside
Thy threats, and anger misapplied!
Art not afraid with sounds like these
To offend where thou canst not appease?
Death is not (wherefore dream'st thou thus?)
The son of Night and Erebus:
Nor was of fell Erynnis born
On gulfs where Chaos rules forlorn.
But sent from God, his presence leaves,
To gather home his ripen'd sheaves,
To call encumber'd souls away
From fleshly bonds to boundless day,
(As when the winged hours excite,
And summon forth the morning light)
And each to convoy to her place
Before the Eternal Father's face.

But not the wicked—them, severe
Yet just, from all their pleasures here
He hurries to the realms below,
Terrific realms of penal woe!
Myself no sooner heard his call,
Than, scaping through my prison wall,
I bade adieu to bolts and bars,
And soar'd, with angels, to the stars,
Like him of old, to whom 'twas given
To mount on fiery wheels to heaven.
Boötes' wagon, slow with cold,
Appall'd me not; nor to behold
The sword that vast Orion draws,
Or e'en the Scorpion's horrid claws.
Beyond the sun's bright orb I fly,
And, far beneath my feet descry
Night's dread goddess, seen with awe,
Whom her winged dragons draw.
Thus, ever wondering at my speed,
Augmented still as I proceed,
I pass the planetary sphere,
The milky way—and now appear
Heaven's crystal battlements, her door
Of massy pearl, and emerald floor.
"But here I cease. For never can
The tongue of once a mortal man
In suitable description trace
The pleasures of that happy place;
Suffice it, that those joys divine
Are all, and all for ever, mine!"

NATURE UNIMPAIRED BY TIME.

Ah, how the human mind wearies herself
With her own wanderings, and, involved in gloom
Impenetrable, speculates amiss!
Measuring in her folly things divine
By human; laws inscribed on adamant
By laws of man's device, and counsels fix'd
For ever, by the hours that pass and die.
How?—shall the face of Nature then be plough'd
Into deep wrinkles, and shall years at last
On the great parent fix a sterile curse?
Shall even she confess old age, and halt,
And, palsy-smitten, shake her starry brows?
Shall foul Antiquity with rust, and drought,
And famine, vex the radiant worlds above?
Shall Time's unsated maw crave and ingulf
The very heavens that regulate his flight?
And was the Sire of all able to fence
His works, and to uphold the circling worlds,
But, through improvident and heedless haste
Let slip the occasion?—so then—all is lost—
And in some future evil hour, yon arch
Shall crumble and come thundering down, the poles
Jar in collision, the Olympian king
Fall with his throne, and Pallas, holding forth
The terrors of the Gorgon shield in vain,
Shall rush to the abyss, like Vulcan hurl'd

Down into Lemnos, through the gate of heaven.
Thou also, with precipitated wheels,
Phœbus! thy own son's fall shalt imitate,
With hideous ruin shalt impress the deep
Suddenly, and the flood shall reek and hiss,
At the extinction of the lamp of day.
Then too shall Hæmus, cloven to his base,
Be shatter'd, and the huge Ceraunian hills,
Once weapons of Tartarean Dis, immersed
In Erebus, shall fill himself with fear.
No. The Almighty Father surer laid
His deep foundations, and, providing well
For the event of all, the scales of fate
Suspended in just equipoise, and bade
His universal works, from age to age,
One tenour hold, perpetual, undisturb'd.
Hence the prime mover wheels itself about
Continual, day by day, and with it bears
In social measure swift, the heavens around.
Not tardier now is Saturn than of old,
Nor radiant less the burning casque of Mars.
Phœbus, his vigour unimpair'd, still shows
The effulgence of his youth, nor needs the god
A downward course, that he may warm the vales;
But, ever rich in influence, runs his road,
Sign after sign, through all the heavenly zone.
Beautiful, as at first, ascends the star
From odoriferous Ind, whose office is
To gather home betimes the ethereal flock,
To pour them o'er the skies again at eve,

And to discriminate the night and day.
Still Cynthia's changeful horn waxes and wanes
Alternate, and with arms extended still
She welcomes to her breast her brother's beams.
Nor have the elements deserted yet
Their functions; thunder with as loud a stroke
As erst smites through the rocks and scatters them.
The east still howls; still the relentless north
Invades the shuddering Scythian, still he breathes
The winter, and still rolls the storms along.
The king of ocean, with his wonted force,
Beats on Pelorus; o'er the deep is heard
The hoarse alarm of Triton's sounding shell;
Nor swim the monsters of the Ægean sea
In shallows, or beneath diminish'd waves.
Thou too, thy ancient vegetative power
Enjoy'st, O earth! Narcissus still is sweet;
And Phœbus! still thy favourite, and still
Thy favourite Cytherea! both retain
Their beauty; nor the mountains, ore enrich'd
For punishment of man, with purer gold
Teem'd ever, or with brighter gems the deep.
  Thus in unbroken series all proceeds;
And shall, till wide involving either pole,
And the immensity of yonder heaven,
The final flames of destiny absorb
The world, consumed in one enormous pyre!

ON THE PLATONIC IDEA AS IT WAS UNDERSTOOD BY ARISTOTLE.

Ye sister powers, who o'er the sacred groves
Preside, and thou, fair mother of them all,
Mnemosyne! and thou who, in thy grot
Immense, reclined at leisure, hast in charge
The archives and the ordinances of Jove,
And dost record the festivals of heaven,
Eternity!—inform us who is He,
That great original by nature chosen
To be the archetype of human kind,
Unchangeable, immortal, with the poles
Themselves coeval, one, yet every where,
An image of the God who gave him being?
Twin-brother of the goddess born from Jove,
He dwells not in his father's mind, but, though
Of common nature with ourselves, exists
Apart, and occupies a local home.
Whether, companion of the stars, he spend
Eternal ages, roaming at his will
From sphere to sphere the tenfold heavens, or dwell
On the moon's side that nearest neighbours earth,
Or torpid on the banks of Lethe sit
Among the multitude of souls ordain'd
To flesh and blood! or whether (as may chance)
That vast and giant model of our kind
In some far distant region of this globe

Sequester'd stalk, with lifted head on high
O'ertowering Atlas, on whose shoulders rest
The stars, terrific even to the gods.
Never the Theban seer, whose blindness proved
His best illumination, him beheld
In secret vision; never him the son
Of Pleione, amid the noiseless night
Descending, to the prophet-choir reveal'd;
Him never knew the Assyrian priest, who yet
The ancestry of Ninus' chronicles,
And Belus, and Osiris, far renown'd;
Nor even thrice great Hermes, although skill'd
So deep in mystery, to the worshippers
Of Isis show'd a prodigy like him.
And thou, who hast immortalized the shades
Of Academus, if the schools received
This monster of the fancy first from thee,
Either recall at once the banish'd bards
To thy republic, or thyself, evinced
A wilder fabulist, go also forth.

TO HIS FATHER.

Oh that Pieria's spring would through my breast
Pour its inspiring influence, and rush
No rill, but rather an o'erflowing flood!
That, for my venerable father's sake
All meaner themes renounced, my muse, on wings
Of duty borne, might reach a loftier strain.

For thee, my father! howsoe'er it please,
She frames this slender work; nor know I aught
That may thy gifts more suitably requite;
Though to requite them suitably would ask
Returns much nobler, and surpassing far
The meagre stores of verbal gratitude:
But, such as I possess, I send thee all.
This page presents thee in their full amount
With thy son's treasures, and the sum is nought;
Nought, save the riches that from airy dream
In secret grottos and in laurel bowers,
I have, by golden Clio's gift, acquired.
Verse is a work divine; despise not thou
Verse therefore, which evinces (nothing more)
Man's heavenly source, and which, retaining still
Some scintillations of Promethean fire,
Bespeaks him animated from above.
The gods love verse; the infernal powers themselves
Confess the influence of verse, which stirs
The lowest deep, and binds in triple chains
Of adamant both Pluto and the shades.
In verse the Delphic priestess and the pale
Tremulous sibyl make the future known;
And he who sacrifices, on the shrine [bull
Hangs verse, both when he smites the threatening
And when he spreads his reeking entrails wide
To scrutinize the fates enveloped there.
We too, ourselves, what time we seek again
Our native skies, and one eternal now
Shall be the only measure of our being.

Crown'd all with gold, and chanting to the lyre
Harmonious verse, shall range the courts above,
And make the starry firmament resound.
And, even now, the fiery spirit pure
That wheels yon circling orbs, directs himself
Their mazy dance with melody of verse
Unutterable, immortal, hearing which
Huge Ophiuchus holds his hiss suppress'd;
Orion, soften'd, drops his ardent blade,
And Atlas stands unconscious of his load.
Verse graced of old the feasts of kings, ere yet
Luxurious dainties, destined to the gulf
Immense of gluttony, were known, and ere
Lyæus deluged yet the temperate board.
Then sat the bard a customary guest
To share the banquet, and, his length of locks
With beechen honours bound, proposed in verse
The characters of heroes and their deeds,
To imitation, sang of chaos old,
Of nature's birth, of gods that crept in search
Of acorns fallen, and of the thunderbolt
Not yet produced from Ætna's fiery cave.
And what avails, at last, tune without voice,
Devoid of matter? Such may suit perhaps
The rural dance, but such was ne'er the song
Of Orpheus, whom the streams stood still to hear
And the oaks follow'd. Not by chords alone
Well touch'd, but by resistless accents more
To sympathetic tears the ghosts themselves
He moved; these praises to his verse he owes.

Nor thou persist, I pray thee, still to slight
The sacred Nine, and to imagine vain
And useless powers, by whom inspired, thyself
Art skilful to associate verse with airs
Harmonious, and to give the human voice
A thousand modulations, heir by right
Indisputable of Arion's fame.
Now say, what wonder is it, if a son
Of thine delight in verse, if, so conjoin'd
In close affinity, we sympathize
In social arts and kindred studies sweet?
Such distribution of himself to us
Was Phœbus' choice; thou hast thy gift, and I
Mine also, and between us we receive,
Father and son, the whole inspiring God.
No! howsoe'er the semblance thou assume
Of hate, thou hatest not the gentle muse,
My father! for thou never badest me tread
The beaten path, and broad, that leads right on
To opulence, nor didst condemn thy son
To the insipid clamours of the bar,
To laws voluminous, and ill observed;
But, wishing to enrich me more, to fill
My mind with treasure, ledst me far away
From city din to deep retreats, to banks
And streams Aonian, and, with free consent,
Didst place me happy at Apollo's side.
I speak not now, on more important themes
Intent, of common benefits, and such
As nature bids, but of thy larger gifts,

My father! who, when I had open'd once
The stores of Roman rhetoric, and learn'd
The full-toned language of the eloquent Greeks,
Whose lofty music graced the lips of Jove,
Thyself didst counsel me to add the flowers
That Gallia boasts, those too, with which the
Italian his degenerate speech adorns, [smooth
That witnesses his mixture with the Goth;
And Palestine's prophetic songs divine.
To sum the whole, whate'er the heaven contains,
The earth beneath it, and the air between,
The rivers and the restless deep, may all
Prove intellectual gain to me, my wish
Concurring with thy will; science herself,
All cloud removed, inclines her beauteous head,
And offers me the lip, if, dull of heart,
I shrink not, and decline her gracious boon.
Go now, and gather dross, ye sordid minds,
That covet it; what could my father more?
What more could Jove himself, unless he gave
His own abode, the heaven, in which he reigns?
More eligible gifts than these were not
Apollo's to his son, had they been safe
As they were insecure, who made the boy
The world's vice-luminary, bade him rule
The radiant chariot of the day, and bind
To his young brows his own all-dazzling wreath.
I therefore, although last and least, my place
Among the learned in the laurel grove
Will hold, and where the conqueror's ivy twines,

Henceforth exempt from the unletter'd throng
Profane, nor even to be seen by such.
Away then, sleepless Care, Complaint, away,
And Envy, with thy "jealous leer malign!"
Nor let the monster Calumny shoot forth
Her venom'd tongue at me. Detested foes!
Ye all are impotent against my peace,
For I am privileged, and bear my breast
Safe, and too high for your viperean wound.
But thou! my father, since to render thanks
Equivalent, and to requite by deeds
Thy liberality, exceeds my power,
Suffice it, that I thus record thy gifts,
And bear them treasured in a grateful mind!
Ye, too, the favourite pastime of my youth,
My voluntary numbers, if ye dare
To hope longevity, and to survive
Your master's funeral, not soon absorb'd
In the oblivious Lethæan gulf,
Shall to futurity perhaps convey
This theme, and by these praises of my sire
Improve the fathers of a distant age!

TO SALSILLUS, A ROMAN POET, MUCH INDISPOSED.

The original is written in a measure called Scazon, which signifies limping, and the measure is so denominated, because, though in other respects Iambic, it terminates with a Spondee, and has, consequently, a more tardy movement.

The reader will immediately see that this property of the Latin verse cannot be imitated in English.

My halting Muse, that dragg'st by choice along
Thy slow, slow step, in melancholy song,
And likest that pace, expressive of thy cares,
Not less than Deiopeia's sprightlier airs,
When in the dance she beats with measured tread
Heaven's floor, in front of Juno's golden bed;
Salute Salsillus, who to verse divine
Prefers, with partial love, such lays as mine.
Thus writes that Milton, then, who, wafted o'er
From his own nest on Albion's stormy shore,
Where Eurus, fiercest of the Æolian band,
Sweeps with ungovern'd rage the blasted land,
Of late to more serene Ausonia came
To view her cities of illustrious name,
To prove, himself a witness of the truth,
How wise her elders, and how learn'd her youth.

Much good, Salsillus! and a body free
From all disease, that Milton asks for thee,
Who now endurest the languor and the pains
That bile inflicts, diffused through all thy veins;
Relentless malady, not moved to spare
By thy sweet Roman voice and Lesbian air!
Health, Hebe's sister, sent us from the skies,
And thou, Apollo, whom all sickness flies,
Pythius, or Pæan, or what name divine
Soe'er thou choose, haste, heal a priest of thine!
Ye groves of Faunus, and ye hills that melt
With vinous dews, where meek Evander dwelt!
If aught salubrious in your confines grow,
Strive which shall soonest heal your poet's woe,
That, render'd to the Muse he loves, again
He may enchant the meadows with his strain.
Numa, reclined in everlasting ease
Amid the shade of dark embowering trees,
Viewing with eyes of unabated fire
His loved Ægeria, shall that strain admire:
So soothed, the tumid Tiber shall revere
The tombs of kings, nor desolate the year,
Shall curb his waters with a friendly rein,
And guide them harmless, till they meet the main.

TO GIOVANNI BATTISTA MANSO,

MARQUIS OF VILLA.

MILTON'S ACCOUNT OF MANSO.

Giovanni Battista Manso, Marquis of Villa, is an Italian nobleman of the highest estimation among his countrymen, for genius, literature, and military accomplishments. To him Torquato Tasso addressed his Dialogues on Friendship, for he was much the friend of Tasso, who has also celebrated him among the other princes of his country, in his poem entitled, Gerusalemme Conquistata, book xx:

> Fra cavalier' magnanimi e cortesi
> Risplende il Manso.

During the Author's stay at Naples he received at the hands of the Marquis a thousand kind offices and civilities, and, desirous not to appear ungrateful, sent him this poem a short time before his departure from that city.

THESE verses also to thy praise, the Nine,
O Manso! happy in that theme, design,
For, Gallus and Mæcenas gone, they see
None such besides, or whom they love as thee;
And if my verse may give the meed of fame,
Thine too shall prove an everlasting name.
Already such, it shines in Tasso's page
(For thou wast Tasso's friend) from age to age,
And, next, the Muse consign'd (not unaware
How high the charge) Marino to thy care,

Who, singing to the nymphs Adonis' praise,
Boasts thee the patron of his copious lays.
To thee alone the poet would entrust
His latest vows, to thee alone his dust;
And thou with punctual piety hast paid,
In labour'd brass, thy tribute to his shade.
Nor this contented thee—but lest the grave
Should aught absorb of theirs which thou couldst save,
All future ages thou hast deign'd to teach
The life, lot, genius, character of each,
Eloquent as the Carian sage, who, true
To his great theme, the life of Homer drew.

I, therefore, though a stranger youth, who come
Chill'd by rude blasts that freeze my northern home,
Thee dear to Clio, confident proclaim,
And thine, for Phœbus' sake, a deathless name.
Nor thou, so kind, wilt view with scornful eye
A muse scarce rear'd beneath our sullen sky,
Who fears not, indiscreet as she is young,
To seek in Latium hearers of her song.
We too, where Thames with its unsullied waves
The tresses of the blue hair'd Ocean laves,
Hear oft by night, or, slumbering, seem to hear,
O'er his wide stream, the swan's voice warbling clear;
And we could boast a Tityrus of yore
Who trod, a welcome guest, your happy shore.

Yes—dreary as we own our northern clime,
E'en we to Phœbus raise the polish'd rhyme,
We too serve Phœbus; Phœbus has received
(If legends old may claim to be believed)

No sordid gifts from us, the golden ear,
The burnish'd apple, ruddiest of the year,
The fragrant crocus, and, to grace his fane,
Fair damsels chosen from the druid train;
Druids, our native bards in ancient time,
Who gods and heroes praised in hallow'd rhyme!
Hence, often as the maids of Greece surround
Apollo's shrine with hymns of festive sound,
They name the virgins who arrived of yore
With British offerings on the Delian shore,
Loxo, from giant Corineus sprung,
Upis, on whose blest lips the future hung,
And Hacaerge, with the golden hair, [bare.
All deck'd with Pictish hues, and all with bosoms
Thou, therefore, happy sage, whatever clime
Shall ring with Tasso's praise in after time,
Or with Marino's, shall be known their friend,
And with an equal flight to fame ascend.
The world shall hear how Phœbus and the Nine
Were inmates once, and willing guests of thine.
Yet Phœbus, when of old constrain'd to roam
The earth, an exile from his heavenly home,
Enter'd, no willing guest, Admetus' door,
Though Hercules had ventured there before.
But gentle Chiron's cave was near, a scene
Of rural peace, clothed with perpetual green,
And thither, oft as respite he required
From rustic clamours loud, the God retired.
There, many a time, on Peneus' bank reclined
At some oak's root, with ivy thick entwined,

Won by his hospitable friend's desire,
He soothed his pains of exile with the lyre.
Then shook the hills, then trembled Peneus' shore,
Nor Oeta felt his load of forests more;
The upland elms descended to the plain,
And soften'd lynxes wonder'd at the strain.
Well may we think, O dear to all above!
Thy birth distinguish'd by the smile of Jove,
And that Apollo shed his kindliest power,
And Maia's son, on that propitious hour,
Since only minds so born can comprehend
A poet's worth, or yield that worth a friend.
Hence on thy yet unfaded cheek appears
The lingering freshness of thy greener years,
Hence in thy front and features we admire
Nature unwither'd and a mind entire.
O might so true a friend to me belong,
So skill'd to grace the votaries of song,
Should I recall hereafter into rhyme
The kings and heroes of my native clime,
Arthur the chief, who even now prepares,
In subterraneous being, future wars,
With all his martial knights, to be restored
Each to his seat around the federal board;
And Oh, if spirit fail me not, disperse
Our Saxon plunderers in triumphant verse!
Then, after all, when, with the past content,
A life I finish, not in silence spent;
Should he, kind mourner, o'er my deathbed bend,
I shall but need to say—"Be yet my friend!"

He, too, perhaps, shall bid the marble breathe
To honour me, and with the graceful wreath
Or of Parnassus or the Paphian isle
Shall bind my brows—but I shall rest the while.
Then also, if the fruits of faith endure,
And virtue's promised recompense be sure,
Born to those seats to which the blest aspire
By purity of soul and virtuous fire,
These rites, as fate permits, I shall survey
With eyes illumined by celestial day,
And, every cloud from my pure spirit driven,
Joy in the bright beatitude of heaven!

ON THE DEATH OF DAMON.

THE ARGUMENT.

Thyrsis and Damon, shepherds and neighbours, had always pursued the same studies, and had, from their earliest days, been united in the closest friendship. Thyrsis, while travelling for improvement, received intelligence of the death of Damon, and, after a time, returning and finding it true, deplores himself, and his solitary condition, in this poem.

By Damon is to be understood Charles Deodati, connected with the Italian city of Lucca by his father's side, in other respects an Englishman; a youth of uncommon genius erudition, and virtue.

Ye Nymphs of Himera, (for ye have shed
Erewhile for Daphnis, and for Hylas dead
And over Bion's long-lamented bier,
The fruitless meed of many a sacred tear)

Now through the villas laved by Thames rehearse
The woes of Thyrsis in Sicilian verse, [found
What sighs he heaved, and how with groans pro-
He made the woods and hollow rocks resound,
Young Damon dead; nor even ceased to pour
His lonely sorrows at the midnight hour.

The green wheat twice had nodded in the ear,
And golden harvest twice enrich'd the year,
Since Damon's lips had gasp'd for vital air
The last, last time, nor Thyrsis yet was there;
For he, enamour'd of the muse, remain'd
In Tuscan Fiorenza long detain'd,
But, stored at length with all he wish'd to learn,
For his flock's sake now hasted to return;
And when the shepherd had resumed his seat
At the elm's root, within his old retreat,
Then 'twas his lot, then, all his loss to know,
And from his burthen'd heart he vented thus his
woe: [are due

"Go, seek your home, my lambs: my thoughts
To other cares than those of feeding you.
Alas! what deities shall I suppose
In heaven, or earth, concern'd for human woes,
Since, Oh my Damon! their severe decree
So soon condemns me to regret of thee!
Depart'st thou thus, thy virtues unrepaid
With fame and honour, like a vulgar shade!
Let him forbid it whose bright rod controls,
And separates sordid from illustrious souls;
Drive far the rabble, and to thee assign
A happier lot with spirits worthy thine!

"Go, seek your home, my lambs; my thoughts
To other cares than those of feeding you. [are due
Whate'er befall, unless by cruel chance
The wolf first give me a forbidding glance,
Thou shalt not moulder undeplored, but long
Thy praise shall dwell on every shepherd's tongue.
To Daphnis first they shall delight to pay,
And, after him, to thee the votive lay,
While Pales shall the flocks and pastures love,
Or Faunus to frequent the field or grove;
At least, if ancient piety and truth,
With all the learned labours of thy youth,
May serve thee aught, or to have left behind
A sorrowing friend, and of the tuneful kind.

"Go, seek your home, my lambs; my thoughts
To other cares than those of feeding you. [are due
Yes, Damon! such thy sure reward shall be;
But ah, what doom awaits unhappy me?
Who, now, my pains and perils shall divide,
As thou wast wont, for ever at my side,
Both when the rugged frost annoy'd our feet,
And when the herbage all was parch'd with heat
Whether the grim wolf's ravage to prevent,
Or the huge lion's, arm'd with darts we went?
Whose converse now shall calm my stormy day,
With charming song who now beguile my way?

"Go, seek your home, my lambs; my thoughts
To other cares than those of feeding you. [are due
In whom shall I confide? Whose counsel find
A balmy medicine for my troubled mind?
Or whose discourse with innocent delight

Shall fill me now, and cheat the wintry night,
While hisses on my hearth the pulpy pear,
And blackening chestnuts start and crackle there,
While storms abroad the dreary meadows whelm,
And the wind thunders through the neighbouring
elm. [are due
"Go, seek your home, my lambs; my thoughts
To other cares than those of feeding you.
Or who, when summer suns their summit reach,
And Pan sleeps hidden by the sheltering beech,
When shepherds disappear, nymphs seek the
sedge,
And the stretch'd rustic snores beneath the hedge,
Who then shall render me thy pleasant vein
Of Attic wit, thy jests, thy smiles again?
"Go, seek your home, my lambs; my thoughts
To other cares than those of feeding you. [are due
Where glens and vales are thickest overgrown
With tangled boughs, I wander now alone,
Till night descend, while blustering wind and
shower
Beat on my temples through the shatter'd bower.
"Go, seek your home, my lambs; my thoughts
To other cares than those of feeding you. [are due
Alas! what rampant weeds now shame my fields,
And what a mildew'd crop the furrow yields;
My rambling vines, unwedded to the trees,
Bear shrivel'd grapes; my myrtles fail to please;
Nor please me more my flocks: they, slighted, turn
Their unavailing looks on me, and mourn.
"Go, seek your home, my lambs; my thoughts
To other cares than those of feeding you. [are due

Ægon invites me to the hazel grove,
Amyntas, on the river's bank to rove,
And young Alphesibœus to a seat
Where branching elms exclude the midday heat.
'Here fountains spring—here mossy hillocks rise;
Here zephyr whispers, and the stream replies.'—
Thus each persuades, but, deaf to every call,
I gain the thickets, and escape them all.
"Go, seek your home, my lambs; my thoughts are due
To other cares than those of feeding you.
Then Mopsus said, (the same who reads so well
The voice of birds, and what the stars foretell,
For he by chance had noticed my return)
'What means thy sullen mood, this deep concern?
Ah, Thyrsis! thou art either crazed with love,
Or some sinister influence from above;
Dull Saturn's influence oft the shepherds rue;
His leaden shaft oblique has pierced thee through.'
"Go, go, my lambs, unpastured as ye are,
My thoughts are all now due to other care.
The nymphs amazed, my melancholy see,
And, 'Thyrsis!' cry—'what will become of thee?
What wouldst thou, Thyrsis? such should not appear
The brow of youth, stern, gloomy, and severe;
Brisk youth should laugh and love—ah, shun the fate
Of those, twice wretched mopes! who love too late!
"Go, go, my lambs, unpastured as ye are;
My thoughts are all now due to other care.

Æglc with Hyas came, to soothe my pain,
And Baucis' daughter, Dryope, the vain,
Fair Dryope, for voice and finger neat
Known far and near, and for her self-conceit;
Chloris too came, whose cottage on the lands
That skirt the Idumanian current stands;
But all in vain they came, and but to see
Kind words, and comfortable, lost on me.

"Go, go, my lambs, unpastured as ye are;
My thoughts are all now due to other care.
Ah blest indifference of the playful herd,
None by his fellow chosen, or preferr'd!
No bonds of amity the flocks inthral,
But each associates, and is pleased with all;
So graze the dappled deer in numerous droves,
And all his kind alike the zebra loves;
The same law governs, where the billows roar,
And Proteus' shoals o'erspread the desert shore;
The sparrow, meanest of the feather'd race,
His fit companion finds in every place,
With whom he picks the grain that suits him best,
Flirts here and there, and late returns to rest,
And whom, if chance the falcon make his prey,
Or hedger with his well aim'd arrow slay,
For no such loss the gay survivor grieves,
New love he seeks, and new delight receives.
We only, an obdurate kind, rejoice,
Scorning all others, in a single choice.
We scarce in thousands meet one kindred mind,
And if the long-sought good at last we find,

When least we fear it, Death our treasure steals,
And gives our heart a wound that nothing heals.
" Go, go, my lambs, unpastured as ye are;
My thoughts are all now due to other care.
Ah, what delusion lured me from my flocks,
To traverse Alpine snows and rugged rocks!
What need so great had I to visit Rome,
Now sunk in ruins, and herself a tomb?
Or, had she flourish'd still, as when, of old,
For her sake Tityrus forsook his fold,
What need so great had I to incur a pause
Of thy sweet intercourse for such a cause,
For such a cause to place the roaring sea, [me?
Rocks, mountains, woods, between my friend and
Else had I grasp'd thy feeble hand, composed
Thy decent limbs, thy drooping eyelids closed,
And, at the last, had said—" Farewell—ascend—
Nor even in the skies forget thy friend!"
" Go, go, my lambs, untended homeward fare;
My thoughts are all now due to other care.
Although well pleased, ye tuneful Tuscan swains!
My mind the memory of your worth retains,
Yet not your worth can teach me less to mourn
My Damon lost.—He too was Tuscan born,
Born in your Lucca, city of renown!
And wit possess'd, and genius, like your own.
Oh how elate was I, when stretch'd beside
The murmuring course of Arno's breezy tide,
Beneath the poplar grove I pass'd my hours,
Now cropping myrtles, and now vernal flowers,

And hearing, as I lay at ease along,
Your swains contending for the prize of song!
I also dared attempt (and, as it seems,
Not much displeased attempting) various themes,
For even I can presents boast from you,
The shepherd's pipe, and osier basket too,
And Dati, and Francini, both have made
My name familiar to the beechen shade,
And they are learn'd, and each in every place
Renown'd for song, and both of Lydian race.

"Go, go, my lambs, untended homeward fare;
My thoughts are all now due to other care.
While bright the dewy grass with moonbeams shone,
And I stood hurdling in my kids alone,
How often have I said (but thou hadst found
Ere then thy dark cold lodgment under ground)
Now Damon sings, or springes sets for hares,
Or wickerwork for various use prepares!
How oft, indulging fancy, have I plann'd
New scenes of pleasure that I hoped at hand,
Call'd thee abroad as I was wont, and cried—
'What, hoa! my friend—come, lay thy task aside;
Haste, let us forth together, and beguile
The heat beneath yon whispering shades awhile,
Or on the margin stray of Colne's clear flood,
Or where Cassibelan's gray turrets stood!
There thou shalt cull me simples, and shalt teach
Thy friend the name and healing powers of each,
From the tall bluebell to the dwarfish weed,
What the dry land, and what the marshes breed,

For all their kinds alike to thee are known,
And the whole art of Galen is thy own.
Ah, perish Galen's art, and wither'd be
The useless herbs that gave not health to thee!
Twelve evenings since, as in poetic dream
I meditating sat some statelier theme,
The reeds no sooner touch'd my lip, though new,
And unessay'd before, than wide they flew,
Bursting their waxen bands, nor could sustain
The deep-toned music of the solemn strain;
And I am vain perhaps, but I will tell
How proud a theme I chose—ye groves, farewell!

"Go, go, my lambs, untended homeward fare;
My thoughts are all now due to other care.
Of Brutus, Dardan chief, my song shall be,
How with his barks he plough'd the British sea,
First from Rutupia's towering headland seen,
And of his consort's reign, fair Imogen;
Of Brennus, and Belinus, brothers bold,
And of Arviragus, and how of old
Our hardy sires the Armorican controll'd;
And of the wife of Gorloïs, who, surprised
By Uther, in her husband's form disguised,
(Such was the force of Merlin's art) became
Pregnant with Arthur of heroic fame.
These themes I now revolve—and Oh—if Fate
Proportion to these themes my lengthen'd date,
Adieu my shepherd's reed—yon pine tree bough
Shall be thy future home, there dangle thou

Forgotten and disused, unless ere long
Thou change thy Latian for a British song:
A British?—even so—the powers of man
Are bounded; little is the most he can;
And it shall well suffice me, and shall be
Fame and proud recompense enough for me,
If Usa, golden-hair'd, my verse may learn,
If Alain bending o'er his crystal urn,
Swift-whirling Abra, Trent's o'ershadow'd stream,
Thames, lovelier far than all in my esteem,
Tamar's ore-tinctured flood, and, after these,
The wave-worn shores of utmost Orcades.

"Go, go, my lambs, untended homeward fare!
My thoughts are all now due to other care.
All this I kept in leaves of laurel rind
Enfolded safe, and for thy view design'd,
This—and a gift from Manso's hand beside,
(Manso, not least his native city's pride)
Two cups that radiant as their giver shone,
Adorn'd by sculpture with a double zone.
The spring was graven there; here slowly wind
The Red Sea shores with groves of spices lined;
Her plumes of various hues amid the boughs
The sacred, solitary phœnix shows,
And, watchful of the dawn, reverts her head
To see Aurora leave her watery bed.
—In other part, the expansive vault above,
And there too, even there, the god of love;
With quiver arm'd he mounts, his torch displays
A vivid light, his gem-tipt arrows blaze,

Around his bright and fiery eyes he rolls,
Nor aims at vulgar minds or little souls,
Nor deigns one look below, but, aiming high,
Sends every arrow to the lofty sky;
Hence forms divine, and minds immortal, learn
The power of Cupid, and enamour'd burn.
"Thou also Damon, (neither need I fear
That hope delusive) thou art also there;
For whither should simplicity like thine
Retire, where else such spotless virtue shine?
Thou dwell'st not (thought profane) in shades below,
Nor tears suit thee—cease then, my tears, to flow.
Away with grief: on Damon ill bestow'd!
Who, pure himself, has found a pure abode,
Has pass'd the showery arch, henceforth resides
With saints and heroes, and from flowing tides
Quaffs copious immortality and joy
With hallow'd lips!—Oh! blest without alloy,
And now enrich'd with all that faith can claim,
Look down, entreated by whatever name,
If Damon please thee most (that rural sound
Shall oft with echoes fill the groves around)
Or if Deodatus, by which alone
In those ethereal mansions thou art known.
Thy blush was maiden, and thy youth the taste
Of wedded bliss knew never, pure and chaste,
The honours, therefore, by divine decree
The lot of virgin worth, are given to thee:
Thy brows encircled with a radiant band,
And the green palm branch waving in thy hand,

Thou in immortal nuptials shalt rejoice,
And join with seraphs thy according voice,
Where rapture reigns, and the ecstatic lyre
Guides the blest orgies of the blazing quire.

AN ODE, ADDRESSED TO MR. JOHN ROUSE,

LIBRARIAN OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD,

ON A LOST VOLUME OF MY POEMS, WHICH HE DESIRED ME TO REPLACE, THAT HE MIGHT ADD THEM TO MY OTHER WORKS DEPOSITED IN THE LIBRARY.

This ode is rendered without rhyme, that it might more adequately represent the original, which, as Milton himself informs us, is of no certain measure. It may possibly for this reason disappoint the reader, though it cost the writer more labour than the translation of any other piece in the whole collection.

STROPHE.

My twofold book! single in show,
But double in contents,
Neat, but not curiously adorn'd,
Which, in his early youth,
A poet gave, no lofty one in truth,
Although an earnest wooer of the Muse—
Say while in cool Ausonian shades
Or British wilds he roam'd,
Striking by turns his native lyre,
By turns the Daunian lute,
And stepp'd almost in air—

ANTISTROPHE.

Say, little book, what furtive hand
Thee from thy fellow books convey'd,
What time, at the repeated suit
Of my most learned friend,
I sent thee forth, an honour'd traveller,
From our great city to the source of Thames,
Cærulean sire!
Where rise the fountains, and the raptures ring,
Of the Aonian choir,
Durable as yonder spheres,
And through the endless lapse of years
Secure to be admired?

STROPHE II.

Now what god, or demigod,
For Britain's ancient genius moved,
(If our afflicted land
Have expiated at length the guilty sloth
Of her degenerate sons)
Shall terminate our impious feuds,
And discipline with hallow'd voice recall?
Recall the Muses too,
Driven from their ancient seats
In Albion, and well nigh from Albion's shore,
And with keen Phœbean shafts
Piercing the unseemly birds,
Whose talons menace us,
Shall drive the harpy race from Helicon afar?

ANTISTROPHE.

But thou, my book, though thou hast stray'd,
Whether by treachery lost,
Or indolent neglect, thy bearer's fault,
From all thy kindred books,
To some dark cell or cave forlorn,
Where thou endurest, perhaps,
The chafing of some hard untutor'd hand,
Be comforted—
For lo! again the splendid hope appears
That thou mayst yet escape
The gulfs of Lethe, and on oary wings
Mount to the everlasting courts of Jove!

STROPHE III.

Since Rouse desires thee, and complains
That, though by promise his,
Thou yet appear'st not in thy place
Among the literary noble stores
Given to his care,
But, absent, leavest his numbers incomplete,
He, therefore, guardian vigilant
Of that unperishing wealth,
Calls thee to the interior shrine, his charge,
Where he intends a richer treasure far
Than Iön kept (Iön, Erectheus' son
Illustrious, of the fair Creüsa born)
In the resplendent temple of his god,
Tripods of gold, and Delphic gifts divine.

ANTISTROPHE.

Haste, then, to the pleasant groves,
The Muses' favourite haunt;
Resume thy station in Apollo's dome,
Dearer to him
Than Delos, or the fork'd Parnassian hill!
Exulting go,
Since now a splendid lot is also thine,
And thou art sought by my propitious friend;
For there thou shalt be read
With authors of exalted note,
The ancient glorious lights of Greece and Rome

EPODE.

Ye, then, my works, no longer vain,
And worthless deem'd by me!
Whate'er this sterile genius has produced,
Expect, at last, the rage of envy spent,
An unmolested happy home,
Gift of kind Hermes, and my watchful friend,
Where never flippant tongue profane
Shall entrance find,
And whence the coarse unletter'd multitude
Shall babble far remote.
Perhaps some future distant age,
Less tinged with prejudice, and better taught,
Shall furnish minds of power
To judge more equally.

Then, malice silenced in the tomb,
Cooler heads and sounder hearts,
Thanks to Rouse, if aught of praise
I merit, shall with candour weigh the claim.

TRANSLATIONS OF THE ITALIAN POEMS.

SONNET.

Fair Lady! whose harmonious name the Rhine,
Through all his grassy vale, delights to hear,
Base were indeed the wretch who could forbear
To love a spirit elegant as thine,
That manifests a sweetness all divine,
Nor knows a thousand winning acts to spare,
And graces, which Love's bow and arrows are,
Tempering thy virtues to a softer shine.
When gracefully thou speak'st, or singest gay,
Such strains as might the senseless forest move,
Ah then—turn each his eyes and ears away,
Who feels himself unworthy of thy love!
Grace can alone preserve him ere the dart
Of fond desire yet reach his inmost heart.

SONNET.

As on a hill-top rude, when closing day
  Imbrowns the scene, some pastoral maiden fair
  Waters a lovely foreign plant with care,
Borne from its native genial airs away,
That scarcely can its tender bud display,
  So, on my tongue these accents, new and rare,
  Are flowers exotic, which Love waters there.
While thus, O sweetly scornful! I essay
  Thy praise in verse to British ears unknown,
  And Thames exchange for Arno's fair domain;
  So Love has will'd and ofttimes Love has shown
  That what he wills, he never wills in vain.
Oh that this hard and sterile breast might be
To Him, who plants from Heaven, a soil as free!

CANZONE.

They mock my toil—the nymphs and amorous
    swains—
And whence this fond attempt to write, they cry,
Love-songs in language that thou little know'st?
How darest thou risk to sing these foreign strains
Say truly. Find'st not oft thy purpose cross'd,
And that thy fairest flowers here fade and die?
Then with pretence of admiration high—

Thee other shores expect, and other tides,
Rivers, on whose grassy sides
Her deathless laurel leaf, with which to bind
Thy flowing locks, already Fame provides;
Why then this burthen, better far declined?
Speak, Muse! for me—the fair one said, who guides
My willing heart, and all my fancy's flights,
"This is the language in which Love delights."

SONNET, TO CHARLES DEODATI.

Charles—and I say it wondering—thou must know
That I, who once assumed a scornful air
And scoff'd at Love, am fallen in his snare,
(Full many an upright man has fallen so:)
Yet think me not thus dazzled by the flow
Of golden locks, or damask cheek; more rare
The heartfelt beauties of my foreign fair;
A mien majestic, with dark brows that show
The tranquil lustre of a lofty mind;
Words exquisite, of idioms more than one,
And song, whose fascinating power might bind,
And from her sphere draw down the labouring moon;
With such fire-darting eyes that, should I fill
My ears with wax, she would enchant me still

SONNET.

Lady! It cannot be but that thine eyes
Must be my sun, such radiance they display,
And strike me e'en as Phœbus him whose way
Through horrid Libya's sandy desert lies.
Meantime, on that side steamy vapours rise
Where most I suffer. Of what kind are they,
New as to me they are, I cannot say,
But deem them, in the lover's language—sighs.
Some, though with pain, my bosom close conceals,
Which, if in part escaping thence, they tend
To soften thine, thy coldness soon congeals.
While others to my tearful eyes ascend,
Whence my sad nights in showers are ever drown'd,
Till my Aurora comes, her brow with roses bound.

SONNET.

Enamour'd, artless, young, on foreign ground,
Uncertain whither from myself to fly;
To thee, dear Lady, with an humble sigh
Let me devote my heart, which I have found
By certain proofs, not few, intrepid, sound,
Good, and addicted to conceptions high:
When tempests shake the world, and fire the sky,
It rests in adamant self-wrapt around,

As safe from envy, and from outrage rude,
From hopes and fears that vulgar minds abuse,
As fond of genius, and fix'd fortitude.
Of the resounding lyre, and every Muse.
Weak you will find it in one only part,
Now pierced by love's immedicable dart.

SIMILE IN PARADISE LOST.

'So when, from mountain tops, the dusky clouds
Ascending,' &c.

Quales aërii montis de vertice nubes
Cum surgunt, et jam Boreæ tumida ora quiêrunt,
Cælum hilares abdit, spissâ caligine, vultus:
Tum si jucundo tandem sol prodeat ore,
Et croceo montes et pascua lumine tingat,
Gaudent omnia, aves mulcent concentibus agros,
Balatuque ovium colles vallesque resultant.

TRANSLATION OF DRYDEN'S EPIGRAM ON MILTON.

Tres tria, sed longè distantia, sæcula vates
Ostentant tribus e gentibus eximios:
Græcia sublimem, cum majestate disertum
Roma tulit, felix Anglia utrique parem.
Partubus ex binis Natura exhausta, coacta est,
Tertius ut fieret, consociare duos.

July, 1780.

TRANSLATIONS FROM VINCENT BOURNE.

THE GLOWWORM.

Beneath the hedge, or near the stream,
A worm is known to stray,
That shows by night a lucid beam,
Which disappears by day.

Disputes have been, and still prevail,
From whence his rays proceed;
Some give that honour to his tail,
And others to his head.

But this is sure—the hand of might,
That kindles up the skies,
Gives him a modicum of light
Proportion'd to his size.

Perhaps indulgent Nature meant,
By such a lamp bestow'd,
To bid the traveller, as he went,
Be careful where he trod:

Nor crush a worm, whose useful light
Might serve, however small,
To show a stumbling stone by night,
And save him from a fall.

Whate'er she meant, this truth divine
Is legible and plain,
'Tis power almighty bids him shine,
Nor bids him shine in vain.

Ye proud and wealthy, let this theme
Teach humbler thoughts to you,
Since such a reptile has its gem,
And boasts its splendour too.

THE JACKDAW.

There is a bird who, by his coat,
And by the hoarseness of his note,
Might be supposed a crow;
A great frequenter of the church,
Where, bishoplike, he finds a perch,
And dormitory too.

Above the steeple shines a plate,
That turns and turns, to indicate
From what point blows the weather.
Look up—your brains begin to swim,
'Tis in the clouds—that pleases him,
He chooses it the rather.

Fond of the speculative height,
Thither he wings his airy flight,
And thence securely sees
The bustle and the rareeshow,
That occupy mankind below,
Secure and at his ease.

You think, no doubt, he sits and muses
On future broken bones and bruises,
If he should chance to fall.
No; not a single thought like that
Employs his philosophic pate,
Or troubles it at all.

He sees that this great roundabout,
The world, with all its motley rout,
Church, army, physic, law,
Its customs and its businesses,
Is no concern at all of his,
And says—what says he?—Caw.

Thrice happy bird! I too have seen
Much of the vanities of men;
And, sick of having seen 'em,
Would cheerfully these limbs resign
For such a pair of wings as thine,
And such a head between 'em.

THE CRICKET.

Little inmate, full of mirth,
Chirping on my kitchen hearth,
Wheresoe'er be thine abode,
Always harbinger of good,
Pay me for thy warm retreat
With a song more soft and sweet;
In return thou shalt receive
Such a strain as I can give.

Thus thy praise shall be express'd,
Inoffensive, welcome guest!
While the rat is on the scout,
And the mouse with curious snout,
With what vermin else infest
Every dish, and spoil the best;
Frisking thus before the fire,
Thou hast all thine heart's desire.

Though in voice and shape they be
Form'd as if akin to thee,
Thou surpassest, happier far,
Happiest grasshoppers that are;
Theirs is but a summer's song,
Thine endures the winter long,
Unimpair'd, and shrill, and clear,
Melody throughout the year.

Neither night nor dawn of day
Puts a period to thy play:
Sing, then—and extend thy span
Far beyond the date of man.
Wretched man, whose years are spent
In repining discontent,
Lives not, aged though he be,
Half a span, compared with thee.

THE PARROT.

In painted plumes superbly dress'd,
A native of the gorgeous east,
By many a billow toss'd;
Poll gains at length the British shore,
Part of the captain's precious store,
A present to his toast.

Belinda's maids are soon preferr'd,
To teach him now and then a word,
As Poll can master it;
But 'tis her own important charge,
To qualify him more at large,
And make him quite a wit.

Sweet Poll! his doting mistress cries,
Sweet Poll! the mimic bird replies,
And calls aloud for sack.

She next instructs him in the kiss;
'Tis now a little one, like Miss,
And now a hearty smack.

At first he aims at what he hears;
And, listening close with both his ears,
Just catches at the sound;
But soon articulates aloud,
Much to the amusement of the crowd,
And stuns the neighbours round.

A querulous old woman's voice
His humorous talent next employs,
He scolds, and gives the lie.
And now he sings, and now is sick,
Here, Sally, Susan, come, come quick,
Poor Poll is like to die!

Belinda and her bird! 'tis rare
To meet with such a well match'd pair,
The language and the tone,
Each character in every part
Sustain'd with so much grace and art,
And both in unison.

When children first begin to spell,
And stammer out a syllable,
We think them tedious creatures;
But difficulties soon abate,
When birds are to be taught to prate,
And women are the teachers.

THE THRACIAN.

THRACIAN parents, at his birth,
Mourn their babe with many a tear,
But with undissembled mirth
Place him breathless on his bier.

Greece and Rome with equal scorn,
"O the savages!" exclaim,
"Whether they rejoice or mourn,
Well entitled to the name!"

But the cause of this concern,
And this pleasure, would they trace,
Even they might somewhat learn
From the savages of Thrace.

RECIPROCAL KINDNESS THE PRIMARY LAW OF NATURE.

ANDROCLES, from his injured lord, in dread
Of instant death, to Libya's desert fled.
Tired with his toilsome flight, and parch'd with heat,
He spied at length a cavern's cool retreat;
But scarce had given to rest his weary frame,
When, hugest of his kind, a lion came:
He roar'd approaching: but the savage din
To plaintive murmurs changed—arrived within,

And with expressive looks, his lifted paw
Presenting, aid implored from whom he saw.
The fugitive, through terror at a stand,
Dared not awhile afford his trembling hand;
But bolder grown, at length inherent found
A pointed thorn, and drew it from the wound.
The cure was wrought; he wiped the sanious blood,
And firm and free from pain the lion stood.
Again he seeks the wilds, and day by day
Regales his inmate with the parted prey.
Nor he disdains the dole, though unprepared,
Spread on the ground, and with a lion shared.
But thus to live—still lost—sequester'd still—
Scarce seem'd his lord's revenge a heavier ill.
Home! native home! O might he but repair!
He must—he will, though death attends him there.
He goes, and doom'd to perish on the sands
Of the full theatre unpitied stands:
When lo! the selfsame lion from his cage
Flies to devour him, famish'd into rage.
He flies, but viewing in his purposed prey
The man, his healer, pauses on his way,
And, soften'd by remembrance into sweet
And kind composure, crouches at his feet.

Mute with astonishment, the assembly gaze:
But why, ye Romans? Whence your mute amaze?
All this is natural: nature bade him rend
An enemy; she bids him spare a friend.

A MANUAL,

MORE ANCIENT THAN THE ART OF PRINTING, AND NOT TO BE FOUND IN ANY CATALOGUE.

THERE is a book, which we may call
(Its excellence is such)
Alone a library, though small;
The ladies thumb it much.

Words none, things numerous it contains:
And things with words compared,
Who needs be told, that has his brains,
Which merits most regard?

Ofttimes its leaves of scarlet hue
A golden edging boast;
And open'd, it displays to view
Twelve pages at the most.

Nor name nor title, stamp'd behind,
Adorns its outer part;
But all within 'tis richly lined,
A magazine of art.

The whitest hands that secret hoard
Oft visit: and the fair
Preserve it in their bosoms stored,
As with a miser's care.

Thence implements of every size,
And form'd for various use,
(They need but to consult their eyes)
They readily produce.

The largest and the longest kind
Possess the foremost page,
A sort most needed by the blind,
Or nearly such from age.

The full charg'd leaf, which next ensues,
Presents in bright array
The smaller sort, which matrons use,
Not quite so blind as they.

The third, the fourth, the fifth supply
What their occasions ask,
Who with a more discerning eye
Perform a nicer task.

But still with regular decrease
From size to size they fall,
In every leaf grow less and less;
The last are least of all.

O! what a fund of genius, pent
In narrow space is here!
This volume's method and intent
How luminous and clear.

It leaves no reader at a loss
Or posed, whoever reads:
No commentator's tedious gloss,
Nor even index needs.

Search Bodley's many thousands o'er!
No book is treasured there,
Nor yet in Granta's numerous store,
That may with this compare.

No!—rival none in either host
Of this was ever seen,
Or, that contents could justly boast,
So brilliant and so keen.

AN ENIGMA.

A NEEDLE, small as small can be,
In bulk and use surpasses me,
Nor is my purchase dear;
For little, and almost for nought,
As many of my kind are bought
As days are in the year.

Yet though but little use we boast,
And are procured at little cost,
The labour is not light;
Nor few artificers it asks,
All skilful in their several tasks,
To fashion us aright.

One fuses metal o'er the fire,
A second draws it into wire,
The shears another plies,
Who clips in length the brazen thread
For him who, chafing every shred,
Gives all an equal size.

A fifth prepares, exact and round,
The knob with which it must be crown'd;
His follower makes it fast:

And with his mallet and his file
To shape the point, employs awhile
The seventh and the last.

Now therefore, Œdipus! declare
What creature, wonderful, and rare,
A process that obtains
Its purpose with so much ado
At last produces!—tell me true,
And take me for your pains!

SPARROWS SELF-DOMESTICATED IN TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

None ever shared the social feast,
Or as an inmate or a guest,
Beneath the celebrated dome
Where once Sir Isaac had his home,
Who saw not (and with some delight
Perhaps he view'd the novel sight)
How numerous, at the tables there,
The sparrows beg their daily fare.
For there, in every nook and cell
Where such a family may dwell,
Sure as the vernal season comes
Their nest they weave in hope of crumbs,
Which kindly given, may serve with food
Convenient their unfeather'd brood;
And oft as with its summons clear
The warning bell salutes their ear,

Sagacious listeners to the sound,
They flock from all the fields around,
To reach the hospitable hall,
None more attentive to the call.
Arrived, the pensionary band,
Hopping and chirping, close at hand,
Solicit what they soon receive,
The sprinkled, plenteous donative.
Thus is a multitude, though large,
Supported at a trivial charge:
A single doit would overpay
The expenditure of every day,
And who can grudge so small a grace
To suppliants, natives of the place?

FAMILIARITY DANGEROUS.

As in her ancient mistress' lap
The youthful tabby lay,
They gave each other many a tap,
Alike disposed to play.

But strife ensues. Puss waxes warm,
And with protruded claws
Ploughs all the length of Lydia's arm,
Mere wantonness the cause.

At once, resentful of the deed,
She shakes her to the ground
With many a threat that she shall bleed
With still a deeper wound.

But, Lydia, bid thy fury rest:
It was a venial stroke:
For she that will with kittens jest
Should bear a kitten's joke.

INVITATION TO THE REDBREAST.

Sweet bird, whom the winter constrains—
And seldom another it can—
To seek a retreat while he reigns
In the well shelter'd dwellings of man,
Who never can seem to intrude,
Though in all places equally free,
Come, oft as the season is rude,
Thou art sure to be welcome to me.

At sight of the first feeble ray
That pierces the clouds of the east,
To inveigle thee every day
My windows shall show thee a feast.
For, taught by experience, I know
Thee mindful of benefit long;
And that, thankful for all I bestow,
Thou wilt pay me with many a song.

Then, soon as the swell of the buds
Bespeaks the renewal of spring,
Fly hence, if thou wilt, to the woods,
Or where it shall please thee to sing:

And shouldst thou, compell'd by a frost,
Come again to my window or door,
Doubt not an affectionate host,
Only pay as thou paid'st me before.

Thus music must needs be confess'd
To flow from a fountain above;
Else how should it work in the breast
Unchangeable friendship and love?
And who on the globe can be found,
Save your generation and ours,
That can be delighted by sound,
Or boasts any musical powers?

STRADA'S NIGHTINGALE.

The shepherd touch'd his reed; sweet Philomel
Essay'd, and oft essay'd to catch the strain,
And treasuring, as on her ear they fell,
The numbers, echo'd note for note again.

The peevish youth, who ne'er had found before
A rival of his skill, indignant heard,
And soon (for various was his tuneful store)
In loftier tones defied the simple bird.

She dared the task, and, rising as he rose,
With all the force that passion gives inspired,
Return'd the sounds awhile, but in the close
Exhausted fell, and at his feet expired.

Thus strength, not skill prevail'd. O fatal strife,
By thee, poor songstress, playfully begun;
And, O sad victory, which cost thy life,
And he may wish that he had never won!

ODE ON THE DEATH OF A LADY,

WHO LIVED ONE HUNDRED YEARS, AND DIED ON HER BIRTHDAY, 1728.

Ancient dame, how wide and vast
To a race like ours appears,
Rounded to an orb at last,
All thy multitude of years!

We, the herd of human kind,
Frailer and of feebler powers;
We, to narrow bounds confined,
Soon exhaust the sum of ours.

Death's delicious banquet—we
Perish even from the womb,
Swifter than a shadow flee,
Nourish'd but to feed the tomb.

Seeds of merciless disease
Lurk in all that we enjoy;
Some that waste us by degrees,
Some that suddenly destroy.

And, if life o'erleap the bourn
Common to the sons of men,
What remains, but that we mourn,
Dream, and dote, and drivel then?

Fast as moons can wax and wane
Sorrow comes; and while we groan,
Pant with anguish, and complain,
Half our years are fled and gone.

If a few (to few 'tis given),
Lingering on this earthly stage,
Creep and halt with steps uneven
To the period of an age,

Wherefore live they, but to see
Cunning, arrogance, and force,
Sights lamented much by thee,
Holding their accustom'd course?

Oft was seen, in ages past,
All that we with wonder view;
Often shall be to the last;
Earth produces nothing new.

Thee we gratulate, content
Should propitious heaven design
Life for us as calmly spent,
Though but half the length of thine.

THE CAUSE WON.

Two neighbours furiously dispute;
A field—the subject of the suit.
Trivial the spot, yet such the rage
With which the combatants engage,
'Twere hard to tell who covets most
The prize——at whatsoever cost.
The pleadings swell. Words still suffice;
No single word but has its price.
No term but yields some fair pretence
For novel and increased expense.
Defendant thus becomes a name,
Which he that bore it may disclaim,
Since both, in one description blended,
Are plaintiffs—when the suit is ended.

THE SILKWORM.

The beams of April, ere it goes,
A worm, scarce visible, disclose;
All winter long content to dwell
The tenant of his native shell.
The same prolific season gives
The sustenance by which he lives,
The mulberry leaf, a simple store,
That serves him—till he needs no more!
For, his dimensions once complete,

Thenceforth none ever sees him eat;
Though till his growing time be past
Scarce ever is he seen to fast.
That hour arrived, his work begins.
He spins and weaves, and weaves and spins;
Till circle upon circle wound
Careless around him and around,
Conceals him with a veil, though slight,
Impervious to the keenest sight.
Thus self-inclosed as in a cask,
At length he finishes his task;
And, though a worm when he was lost,
Or caterpillar at the most,
When next we see him, wings he wears,
And in papilio pomp appears;
Becomes oviparous; supplies
With future worms and future flies
The next ensuing year—and dies!
Well were it for the world, if all
Who creep about this earthly ball,
Though shorter lived than most he be,
Were useful in their kind as he.

THE INNOCENT THIEF.

Not a flower can be found in the fields,
Or the spot that we till for our pleasure,
From the largest to the least, but it yields
The bee, never wearied, a treasure.

Scarce any she quits unexplored
With a diligence truly exact;
Yet, steal what she may for her hoard,
Leaves evidence none of the fact.

Her lucrative task she pursues,
And pilfers with so much address,
That none of their odour they lose,
Nor charm by their beauty the less.

Not thus inoffensively preys
The cankerworm, in-dwelling foe!
His voracity not thus allays
The sparrow, the finch, or the crow.

The worm, more expensively fed,
The pride of the garden devours;
And birds peck the seed from the bed,
Still less to be spared than the flowers.

But she with such delicate skill
Her pillage so fits for her use,
That the chemist in vain with his still
Would labour the like to produce.

Then grudge not her temperate meals,
Nor a benefit blame as a theft;
Since, stole she not all that she steals,
Neither honey nor wax would be left.

DENNER'S OLD WOMAN.

In this mimic form of a matron in years,
How plainly the pencil of Denner appears!
The matron herself, in whose old age we see
Not a trace of decline, what a wonder is she!
No dimness of eye, and no cheek hanging low,
No wrinkle, or deep-furrow'd frown on the brow!
Her forehead indeed is here circled around
With locks like the ribband with which they are
bound;
While glossy and smooth, and as soft as the skin
Of a delicate peach, is the down of her chin;
But nothing unpleasant, or sad, or severe,
Or that indicates life in its winter—is here.
Yet all is express'd with fidelity due,
Nor a pimple or freckle conceal'd from the view.
Many fond of new sights, or who cherish a taste
For the labours of art, to the spectacle haste.
The youths all agree, that could old age inspire
The passion of love, hers would kindle the fire,
And the matrons with pleasure confess that they
Ridiculous nothing or hideous in thee. [see
The nymphs for themselves scarcely hope a decline,
O wonderful woman! as placid as thine.
Strange magic of art! which the youth can
engage
To peruse, half enamour'd, the features of age;

And force from the virgin a sigh of despair,
That she when as old shall be equally fair!
How great is the glory that Denner has gain'd,
Since Apelles not more for his Venus obtain'd.

THE TEARS OF A PAINTER.

Apelles, hearing that his boy
Had just expired—his only joy!
Although the sight with anguish tore him,
Bade place his dear remains before him.
He seized his brush, his colours spread;
And—"Oh! my child, accept,"—he said,
"('Tis all that I can now bestow),
This tribute of a father's woe!"
Then, faithful to the twofold part,
Both of his feelings and his art,
He closed his eyes with tender care,
And form'd at once a fellow pair.
His brow with amber locks beset,
And lips he drew not livid yet;
And shaded all that he had done
To a just image of his son.
Thus far is well. But view again
The cause of thy paternal pain!
Thy melancholy task fulfil!
It needs the last, last touches still.

Again his pencil's powers he tries,
For on his lips a smile he spies:
And still his cheek unfaded shows
The deepest damask of the rose.
Then, heedful to the finish'd whole,
With fondest eagerness he stole,
Till scarce himself distinctly knew
The cherub copied from the true.
Now, painter, cease! Thy task is done.
Long lives this image of thy son;
Nor short-lived shall the glory prove
Or of thy labour or thy love.

THE MAZE.

From right to left, and to and fro,
Caught in a labyrinth you go,
And turn, and turn, and turn again,
To solve the mystery, but in vain;
Stand still, and breathe, and take from me
A clue, that soon shall set you free!
Not Ariadne, if you meet her,
Herself could serve you with a better.
You enter'd easily—find where—
And make with ease your exit there!

NO SORROW PECULIAR TO THE SUFFERER.

The lover, in melodious verses,
His singular distress rehearses.
Still closing with a rueful cry,
"Was ever such a wretch as I!"
Yes! thousands have endured before
All thy distress; some, haply, more.
Unnumber'd Corydons complain,
And Strephons, of the like disdain;
And if thy Chloe be of steel,
Too deaf to hear, too hard to feel;
Not her alone that censure fits,
Nor thou alone hast lost thy wits.

THE SNAIL.

To grass, or leaf, or fruit, or wall,
The Snail sticks close, nor fears to fall,
As if he grew there, house and all
Together.

Within that house secure he hides,
When danger imminent betides
Of storm, or other harm besides
Of weather.

Give but his horns the slightest touch,
His self-collecting power is such,
He shrinks into his house with much
Displeasure.

Where'er he dwells, he dwells alone,
Except himself has chattels none,
Well satisfied to be his own
Whole treasure.

Thus, hermit-like, his life he leads,
Nor partner of his banquet needs,
And if he meets one, only feeds
The faster.

Who seeks him must be worse than blind,
(He and his house are so combined)
If, finding it, he fails to find
Its master.

THE CANTAB.

With two spurs or one, and no great matter which,
Boots bought, or boots borrow'd, a whip or a switch,
Five shillings or less for the hire of his beast,
Paid part into hand;—you must wait for the rest.
Thus equipt, Academicus climbs up his horse,
And out they both sally for better or worse;
His heart void of fear, and as light as a feather;
And in violent haste to go not knowing whither:

Through the fields and the towns; (see!) he scampers along,
And is look'd at and laugh'd at by old and by young.
Till at length overspent, and his sides smear'd with blood,
Down tumbles his horse, man and all, in the mud.
In a wagon or chaise, shall he finish his route?
Oh! scandalous fate, he must do it on foot.
Young gentlemen, hear!—I am older than you!
The advice that I give I have proved to be true,
Wherever your journey may be, never doubt it,
The faster you ride, you're the longer about it.

ON THE PICTURE OF A SLEEPING CHILD.

Sweet babe! whose image here express'd
Does thy peaceful slumbers show;
Guilt or fear, to break thy rest,
Never did thy spirit know.

Soothing slumbers! soft repose!
Such as mock the painter's skill,
Such as innocence bestows,
Harmless infant! lull thee still!

MINOR POEMS.

VERSES WRITTEN AT BATH, ON FINDING THE HEEL OF A SHOE.

Fortune! I thank thee: gentle goddess! thanks!
Not that my Muse, though bashful, shall deny
She would have thank'd thee rather hadst thou cast
A treasure in her way; for neither meed
Of early breakfast, to dispel the fumes,
And bowel-raking pains of emptiness,
Nor noontide feast, nor evening's cool repast,
Hopes she from this—presumptuous, tho', perhaps,
The cobbler, leather-carving artist! might.
Nathless she thanks thee, and accepts thy boon,
Whatever; not as erst the fabled cock,
Vainglorious fool! unknowing what he found,
Spurn'd the rich gem thou gavest him. Wherefore, ah!
Why not on me that favour, (worthier sure!)
Conferr'dst thou, goddess! Thou art blind, thou say'st:
Enough!—thy blindness shall excuse the deed.
Nor does my Muse no benefit exhale
From this thy scant indulgence!—even here
Hints worthy sage philosophy are found;
Illustrious hints, to moralize my song!

This ponderous heel of perforated hide
Compact, with pegs indented, many a row,
Haply (for such its massy form bespeaks)
The weighty tread of some rude peasant clown
Upbore: on this supported oft, he stretch'd,
With uncouth strides, along the furrow'd glebe,
Flattening the stubborn clod, till cruel time
(What will not cruel time?) on a wry step
Sever'd the strict cohesion; when, alas!
He, who could erst, with even, equal pace,
Pursue his destined way with symmetry,
And some proportion form'd, now on one side,
Curtail'd and maim'd, the sport of vagrant boys,
Cursing his frail supporter, treacherous prop!
With toilsome steps, and difficult, moves on.
Thus fares it oft with other than the feet
Of humble villager—the statesman thus,
Up the steep road where proud ambition leads,
Aspiring, first uninterrupted winds
His prosperous way; nor fears miscarriage foul,
While policy prevails, and friends prove true:
But that support soon failing, by him left,
On whom he most depended, basely left,
Betray'd, deserted; from his airy height
Headlong he falls; and through the rest of life
Drags the dull load of disappointment on.

1748.

AN ODE,

ON READING RICHARDSON'S HISTORY OF SIR CHARLES GRANDISON.

Say, ye apostate and profane,
Wretches, who blush not to disdain
Allegiance to your God,—
Did e'er your idly wasted love
Of virtue for her sake remove,
And lift you from the crowd?

Would you the race of glory run,
Know, the devout, and they alone,
Are equal to the task:
The labours of the illustrious course
Far other than the unaided force
Of human vigour ask.

To arm against repeated ill
The patient heart too brave to feel
The tortures of despair:
Nor safer yet high-crested pride,
When wealth flows in with every tide
To gain admittance there.

To rescue from the tyrant's sword
The oppress'd;—unseen and unimplored,
To cheer the face of woe;
From lawless insult to defend
An orphan's right—a fallen friend,
And a forgiven foe;

These, these distinguish from the crowd,
And these alone, the great and good,
The guardians of mankind;
Whose bosoms with these virtues heave,
O, with what matchless speed they leave
The multitude behind!

Then ask ye, from what cause on earth
Virtues like these derive their birth,
Derived from Heaven alone;
Full on that favour'd breast they shine,
Where faith and resignation join
To call the blessing down.

Such is that heart:—but while the Muse
Thy theme, O Richardson, pursues,
Her feeble spirits faint:
She cannot reach, and would not wrong,
That subject for an angel's song,
The hero, and the saint!

1753.

AN EPISTLE TO ROBERT LLOYD, ESQ

'Tis not that I design to rob
Thee of thy birthright, gentle Bob,
For thou art born sole heir, and single,
Of dear Mat Prior's easy jingle;
Not that I mean, while thus I knit
My threadbare sentiments together,

To show my genius or my wit,
When God and you know I have neither;
Or such as might be better shown
By letting poetry alone.
'Tis not with either of these views
That I presume to address the muse:
But to divert a fierce banditti,
(Sworn foes to every thing that's witty!)
That, with a black, infernal train,
Make cruel inroads in my brain,
And daily threaten to drive thence
My little garrison of sense;
The fierce banditti which I mean
Are gloomy thoughts, led on by Spleen.
Then there's another reason yet,
Which is, that I may fairly quit
The debt, which justly became due
The moment when I heard from you:
And you might grumble, crony mine,
If paid in any other coin;
Since twenty sheets of lead, God knows,
(I would say twenty sheets of prose)
Can ne'er be deem'd worth half so much
As one of gold, and yours was such.
Thus, the preliminaries settled,
I fairly find myself pitchkettled,[1]

[1] Pitchkettled, a favourite phrase at the time when this Epistle was written, expressive of being puzzled, or what in the Spectator's time would have been called bamboozled.

And cannot see, though few see better,
How I shall hammer out a letter.
First, for a thought—since all agree—
A thought—I have it—let me see—
'Tis gone again—plague on't! I thought
I had it—but I have it not.
Dame Gurton thus, and Hodge her son,
That useful thing, her needle, gone!
Rake well the cinders—sweep the floor,
And sift the dust behind the door;
While eager Hodge beholds the prize
In old grimalkin's glaring eyes;
And gammer finds it on her knees
In every shining straw she sees.
This simile were apt enough;
But I've another, critic proof!
The virtuoso thus, at noon,
Broiling beneath a July sun,
The gilded butterfly pursues,
O'er hedge and ditch, through gaps and mews;
And, after many a vain essay,
To captivate the tempting prey,
Gives him at length the lucky pat,
And has him safe beneath his hat:
Then lifts it gently from the ground;
But ah! 'tis lost as soon as found;
Culprit his liberty regains,
Flits out of sight, and mocks his pains.
The sense was dark; 'twas therefore fit
With simile to illustrate it;

But as too much obscures the sight,
As often as too little light,
We have our similes cut short,
For matters of more grave import.
That Matthew's numbers run with ease,
Each man of common sense agrees!
All men of common sense allow
That Robert's lines are easy too:
Where then the preference shall we place,
Or how do justice in this case?
Matthew (says Fame) with endless pains
Smooth'd and refined the meanest strains;
Nor suffer'd one ill chosen rhyme
To escape him at the idlest time;
And thus o'er all a lustre cast,
That, while the language lives, shall last.
A'nt please your ladyship (quoth I),
For 'tis my business to reply;
Sure so much labour, so much toil,
Bespeak at least a stubborn soil:
Theirs be the laurel-wreath, decreed,
Who both write well, and write full speed!
Who throw their Helicon about
As freely as a conduit spout!
Friend Robert, thus like *chien sçavant*,
Lets fall a poem *en passant*,
Nor needs his genuine ore refine!
'Tis ready polish'd from the mine.

1754.

A TALE, FOUNDED ON A FACT,

WHICH HAPPENED IN JANUARY 1778.

WHERE Humber pours his rich commercial stream
There dwelt a wretch, who breathed but to blas-
In subterraneous caves his life he led, [pheme;
Black as the mine in which he wrought for bread.
When on a day, emerging from the deep,
A sabbath-day, (such sabbaths thousands keep!)
The wages of his weekly toil he bore
To buy a cock—whose blood might win him more;
As if the noblest of the feather'd kind
Were but for battle and for death design'd;
As if the consecrated hours were meant
For sport, to minds on cruelty intent;
It chanced (such chances Providence obey)
He met a fellow-labourer on the way,
Whose heart the same desires had once inflamed;
But now the savage temper was reclaim'd.
Persuasion on his lips had taken place;
For all plead well who plead the cause of grace.
His iron heart with scripture he assail'd,
Woo'd him to hear a sermon, and prevail'd.
His faithful bow the mighty preacher drew,
Swift as the lightning-glimpse the arrow flew.
He wept; he trembled; cast his eyes around,
To find a worse than he; but none he found.
He felt his sins, and wonder'd he should feel.
Grace made the wound, and grace alone could heal.

Now farewell oaths, and blasphemies, and lies!
He quits the sinner's for the martyr's prize.
That holy day was wash'd with many a tear,
Gilded with hope, yet shaded too by fear.
The next, his swarthy brethren of the mine
Learn'd, by his alter'd speech, the change divine!
Laugh'd when they should have wept, and swore the day
Was nigh when he would swear as fast as they.
"No," said the penitent, "such words shall share
This breath no more; devoted now to prayer.
O! if thou seest (thine eye the future sees)
That I shall yet again blaspheme, like these;
Now strike me to the ground on which I kneel,
Ere yet this heart relapses into steel;
Now take me to that Heaven I once defied,
Thy presence, thy embrace!"—He spoke, and died!

TO THE REV. MR. NEWTON, ON HIS RETURN FROM RAMSGATE.

THAT ocean you have late survey'd,
Those rocks I too have seen,
But I afflicted and dismay'd,
You tranquil and serene.

You from the flood-controlling steep
Saw stretch'd before your view,
With conscious joy, the threatening deep,
No longer such to you.

To me the waves, that ceaseless broke
Upon the dangerous coast,
Hoarsely and ominously spoke
Of all my treasure lost.

Your sea of troubles you have past,
And found the peaceful shore;
I, tempest-toss'd, and wreck'd at last,
Come home to port no more.

Oct. 1780.

LOVE ABUSED.

WHAT is there in the vale of life
Half so delightful as a wife,
When friendship, love, and peace combine
To stamp the marriage bond divine?
The stream of pure and genuine love
Derives its current from above;

And earth a second Eden shows,
Where'er the healing water flows:
But ah, if from the dykes and drains
Of sensual nature's feverish veins,
Lust, like a lawless headstrong flood,
Impregnated with ooze and mud,
Descending fast on every side,
Once mingles with the sacred tide,
Farewell the soul-enlivening scene!
The banks that wore a smiling green,
With rank defilement overspread,
Bewail their flowery beauties dead.
The stream polluted, dark, and dull,
Diffused into a Stygian pool,
Through life's last melancholy years
Is fed with overflowing tears:
Complaints supply the zephyr's part,
And sighs that heave a breaking heart.

A POETICAL EPISTLE TO LADY AUSTEN.

Dear Anna—between friend and friend
Prose answers every common end;
Serves in a plain and homely way,
To express the occurrence of the day;
Our health, the weather, and the news!
What walks we take, what books we choose;
And all the floating thoughts we find
Upon the surface of the mind.

But when a poet takes the pen,
Far more alive than other men,
He feels a gentle tingling come
Down to his finger and his thumb,
Derived from nature's noblest part,
The centre of a glowing heart:
And this is what the world, who knows
No flights above the pitch of prose,
His more sublime vagaries slighting,
Denominates an itch for writing.
No wonder I, who scribble rhyme
To catch the triflers of the time,
And tell them truths divine and clear,
Which, couch'd in prose, they will not hea
Who labour hard to allure and draw
The loiterers I never saw,
Should feel that itching and that tingling
With all my purpose intermingling,
To your intrinsic merit true,
When call'd to address myself to you.

Mysterious are his ways whose powe
Brings forth that unexpected hour,
When minds, that never met before,
Shall meet, unite, and part no more:
It is the allotment of the skies,
The hand of the Supremely Wise,
That guides and governs our affections
And plans and orders our connexions:
Directs us in our distant road,
And marks the bounds of our abode.

Thus we were settled when you found us,
Peasants and children all around us,
Not dreaming of so dear a friend,
Deep in the abyss of Silver-End.[1]
Thus Martha, e'en against her will,
Perch'd on the top of yonder hill;
And you, though you must needs prefer
The fairer scenes of sweet Sancerre,[2]
Are come from distant Loire to choose
A cottage on the banks of Ouse.
This page of providence quite new,
And now just opening to our view,
Employs our present thoughts and pains:
To guess and spell what it contains:
But day by day, and year by year,
Will make the dark enigma clear;
And furnish us, perhaps, at last,
Like other scenes already past,
With proof, that we, and our affairs,
Are part of a Jehovah's cares:
For God unfolds by slow degrees
The purport of his deep decrees;
Sheds every hour a clearer light
In aid of our defective sight;
And spreads, at length, before the soul,
A beautiful and perfect whole,

[1] An obscure part of Olney, adjoining to the residence of Cowper, which faced the market place.
[2] Lady Austen's residence in France.

Which busy man's inventive brain
Toils to anticipate in vain.
Say, Anna, had you never known
The beauties of a rose full blown,
Could you, though luminous your eye,
By looking on the bud, descry,
Or guess, with a prophetic power,
The future splendour of the flower?
Just so the Omnipotent, who turns
The system of a world's concerns,
From mere minutiæ can educe
Events of most important use;
And bid a dawning sky display
The blaze of a meridian day.
The works of man tend, one and all,
As needs they must, from great to small!
And vanity absorbs at length
The monuments of human strength.
But who can tell how vast the plan
Which this day's incident began?
Too small, perhaps the slight occasion
For our dim-sighted observation;
It pass'd unnoticed, as the bird
That cleaves the yielding air unheard,
And yet may prove, when understood,
A harbinger of endless good.
Not that I deem, or mean to call
Friendship a blessing cheap or small:
But merely to remark, that ours,
Like some of nature's sweetest flowers,

Rose from a seed of tiny size,
That seem'd to promise no such prize;
A transient visit intervening,
And made almost without a meaning,
(Hardly the effect of inclination,
Much less of pleasing expectation)
Produced a friendship, then begun,
That has cemented us in one;
And placed it in our power to prove,
By long fidelity and love,
That Solomon has wisely spoken;
"A threefold cord is not soon broken."

Dec. 1781.

THE COLUBRIAD.

Close by the threshold of a door nail'd fast
Three kittens sat; each kitten look'd aghast.
I, passing swift and inattentive by,
At the three kittens cast a careless eye;
Not much concern'd to know what they did there;
Not deeming kittens worth a poet's care.
But presently a loud and furious hiss
Caused me to stop, and to exclaim, "What's this?"
When lo! upon the threshold met my view,
With head erect, and eyes of fiery hue,
A viper, long as Count De Grasse's queue.
Forth from his head his forked tongue he throws,
Darting it full against a kitten's nose;

Who having never seen, in field or house,
The like, sat still and silent as a mouse;
Only projecting, with attention due,
Her whisker'd face, she ask'd him "Who are you?"
On to the hall went I, with pace not slow,
But swift as lightning, for a long Dutch hoe;
With which well arm'd I hasten'd to the spot,
To find the viper, but I found him not.
And turning up the leaves and shrubs around,
Found only that he was not to be found.
But still the kittens, sitting as before,
Sat watching close the bottom of the door.
"I hope," said I, "the villain I would kill
Has slipp'd between the door and the door sill;
And if I make dispatch, and follow hard,
No doubt but I shall find him in the yard:
For long ere now it should have been rehearsed,
'Twas in the garden that I found him first.
E'en there I found him, there the full grown cat
His head, with velvet paw, did gently pat:
As curious as the kittens erst had been
To learn what this phenomenon might mean.
Fill'd with heroic ardour at the sight,
And fearing every moment he would bite,
And rob our household of our only cat
That was of age to combat with a rat;
With outstretch'd hoe I slew him at the door,
And taught him NEVER TO COME THERE NO MORE.

1782.

ON THE LOSS OF THE ROYAL GEORGE.

WRITTEN WHEN THE NEWS ARRIVED.

TO THE MARCH IN SCIPIO.

Toll for the brave!
The brave that are no more!
All sunk beneath the wave,
Fast by their native shore!

Eight hundred of the brave,
Whose courage well was tried,
Had made the vessel heel,
And laid her on her side.

A land breeze shook the shrouds,
And she was overset;
Down went the Royal George,
With all her crew complete.

Toll for the brave!
Brave Kempenfelt is gone;
His last sea-fight is fought;
His work of glory done.

It was not in the battle;
No tempest gave the shock;
She sprang no fatal leak;
She ran upon no rock.

His sword was in its sheath;
His fingers held the pen,
When Kempenfelt went down
With twice four hundred men.

Weigh the vessel up,
Once dreaded by our foes!
And mingle with our cup
The tear that England owes.

Her timbers yet are sound,
And she may float again
Full charged with England's thunder,
And plough the distant main.

But Kempenfelt is gone,
His victories are o'er;
And he and his eight hundred
Shall plough the wave no more.

Sept. 1782.

IN SUBMERSIONEM NAVIGII, CUI GEORGIUS REGALE NOMEN INDITUM.

Plangimus fortes. Perière fortes,
Patrium propter perière littus
Bis quater centum; subitò sub alto
Æquore mersi.

Navis, innitens lateri, jacebat,
Malus ad summas trepidabat undas,
Cùm levis, funes quatiens, ad imum
Depulit aura.

Plangimus fortes. Nimis, heu, caducam
Fortibus vitam voluêre parcæ,
Nec sinunt ultrà tibi nos recentes
Nectere laurus,

Magne, qui nomen, licèt incanorum,
Traditum ex multis atavis tulisti!
At tuos olim memorabit ævum
Omne triumphos.

Non hyems illos furibunda mersit,
Non mari in clauso scopuli latentes,
Fissa non rimis abies, nec atrox
Abstulit ensis.

Navitæ sed tum nimium jocosi
Voce fallebant hilari laborem,
Et quiescebat, calamoque dextram impleverat heros.

Vos, quibus cordi est grave opus piumque,
Humidum ex alto spolium levate,
Et putrescentes sub aquis amicos
Reddite amicis!

Hi quidem (sic dîs placuit) fuêre:
Sed ratis, nondùm putris, ire possit
Rursùs in bellum, Britonumque nomen
Tollere ad astra.

SONG. ON PEACE.

WRITTEN IN THE SUMMER OF 1783, AT THE REQUEST OF LADY AUSTEN, WHO GAVE THE SENTIMENT.

AIR—"MY FOND SHEPHERDS OF LATE."

No longer I follow a sound;
No longer a dream I pursue:
O happiness! not to be found,
Unattainable treasure, adieu!

I have sought thee in splendour and dress,
In the regions of pleasure and taste;
I have sought thee, and seem'd to possess,
But have proved thee a vision at last.

An humble ambition and hope
The voice of true wisdom inspires;
'Tis sufficient, if peace be the scope,
And the summit of all our desires.

Peace may be the lot of the mind
That seeks it in meekness and love;
But rapture and bliss are confined
To the glorified spirits above.

SONG.

ALSO WRITTEN AT THE REQUEST OF LADY AUSTEN.

AIR—"THE LASS OF PATTIE'S MILL."

When all within is peace
How nature seems to smile!
Delights that never cease
The livelong day beguile.

From morn to dewy eve
With open hand she showers
Fresh blessings, to deceive
And soothe the silent hours.

It is content of heart
Gives nature power to please;
The mind that feels no smart
Enlivens all it sees;
Can make a wintry sky
Seem bright as smiling May,
And evening's closing eye
As peep of early day.

The vast majestic globe,
So beauteously array'd
In nature's various robe,
With wondrous skill display'd,
Is to a mourner's heart
A dreary wild at best;
It flutters to depart,
And longs to be at rest.

THE VALEDICTION.[1]

Farewell, false hearts! whose best affections fail
Like shallow brooks which summer suns exhale!
Forgetful of the man whom once ye chose,
Cold in his cause, and careless of his woes;
I bid you both a long and last adieu!
Cold in my turn, and unconcerned like you.
First, farewell Niger![2] whom, now duly proved,
I disregard as much as I have loved.
Your brain well furnished, and your tongue well taught
To press with energy your ardent thought,
Your senatorial dignity of face,
Sound sense, intrepid spirit, manly grace,
Have raised you high as talents can ascend,
Made you a peer, but spoilt you for a friend!
Pretend to all that parts have e'er acquired;
Be great, be feared, be envied, be admired;
To fame as lasting as the earth pretend,
But not hereafter to the name of friend!
I sent you verse, and, as your lordship knows,
Backed with a modest sheet of humble prose;
Not to recall a promise to your mind,
Fulfilled with ease had you been so inclined,

[1] This poem was written under a just and natural resentment. Cowper sent the poem to Unwin, with an injunction that it was not to be printed; and Hayley, publishing it after his death, suppressed the first half, including the personal matter, out of consideration to Lord Thurlow, who was still living.

[2] Lord Thurlow.

But to comply with feelings, and to give
Proof of an old affection still alive.
Your sullen silence serves at least to tell
Your altered heart: and so, my lord, farewell!
Next, busy actor on a meaner stage,[1]
Amusement-monger of a trifling age,
Illustrious histrionic patentee,
Terentius, once my friend, farewell to thee!
In thee some virtuous qualities combine,
To fit thee for a nobler part than thine,
Who, born a gentleman, had stooped too low,
To live by buskin, sock, and raree-show.
Thy schoolfellow, and partner of thy plays,
When Nichols swung the birch and twined the bays,
And having known thee bearded and full grown,
The weekly censor of a laughing town,
I thought the volume I presumed to send,
Graced with the name of a long-absent friend,
Might prove a welcome gift, and touch thine heart,
Not hard by nature, in a feeling part.
But thou, it seems, (what cannot grandeur do,
Though but a dream?) art grown disdainful too;
And strutting in thy school of queens and kings,
Who fret their hour and are forgotten things,
Has caught the cold distemper of the day,
And, like his lordship, cast thy friend away.
Oh Friendship! cordial of the human breast!
So little felt, so fervently profess'd!
Thy blossoms deck our unsuspecting years;
The promise of delicious fruit appears.

[1] Colman.

We hug the hopes of constancy and truth,
Such is the folly of our dreaming youth;
But soon, alas! detect the rash mistake
That sanguine inexperience loves to make:
And view with tears the expected harvest lost,
Decay'd by time, or wither'd by a frost.
Whoever undertakes a friend's great part
Should be renew'd in nature, pure in heart,
Prepared for martyrdom, and strong to prove
A thousand ways the force of genuine love.
He may be call'd to give up health and gain,
To exchange content for trouble, ease for pain,
To echo sigh for sigh, and groan for groan,
And wet his cheeks with sorrows not his own.
The heart of man, for such a task too frail,
When most relied on is most sure to fail;
And, summon'd to partake its fellow's woe,
Starts from its office like a broken bow.

Votaries of business and of pleasure, prove
Faithless alike in friendship and in love.
Retired from all the circles of the gay,
And all the crowds that bustle life away,
To scenes where competition, envy, strife,
Beget no thunder-clouds to trouble life,
Let me, the charge of some good angel, find
One who has known, and has escaped mankind;
Polite, yet virtuous, who has brought away
The manners, not the morals, of the day:
With him, perhaps with her (for men have known
No firmer friendships than the fair have shown),

Let me enjoy, in some unthought of spot,
All former friends forgiven, and forgot,
Down to the close of life's fast fading scene,
Union of hearts without a flaw between.
'Tis grace, 'tis bounty, and it calls for praise,
If God give health, that sunshine of our days!
And if he add, a blessing shared by few,
Content of heart, more praises still are due—
But if he grant a friend, that boon possess'd
Indeed is treasure, and crowns all the rest;
And giving one, whose heart is in the skies,
Born from above and made divinely wise,
He gives, what bankrupt nature never can,
Whose noblest coin is light and brittle man,
Gold, purer far than Ophir ever knew,
A soul, an image of himself, and therefore true.

Nov. 1783.

IN BREVITATEM VITÆ SPATII HOMINIBUS CONCESSI.

BY DR. JORTIN.

Hei mihi! lege ratâ sol occidit atque resurgit,
Lunaque mutatæ reparat dispendia formæ,
Astraque, purpurei telis extincta diei,
Rursus nocte vigent. Humiles telluris alumni,
Graminis herba virens, et florum picta propago,
Quos crudelis hyems lethali tabe peredit,
Cum Zephyri vox blanda vocat, rediitque sereni

Temperies anni, fœcundo e cespite surgunt.
Nos domini rerum, nos, magna et pulchra minati,
Cum breve ver vitæ robustaque transiit ætas,
Deficimus ; nec nos ordo revolubilis auras
Reddit in æthereas, tumuli neque claustra resolvit.

ON THE SHORTNESS OF HUMAN LIFE.

TRANSLATION OF THE FOREGOING.

Suns that set, and moons that wane,
Rise and are restored again ;
Stars that orient day subdues,
Night at her return renews.
Herbs and flowers, the beauteous birth
Of the genial womb of earth,
Suffer but a transient death
From the winter's cruel breath.
Zephyr speaks ; serener skies
Warm the glebe, and they arise.
We, alas ! earth's haughty kings,
We, that promise mighty things,
Losing soon life's happy prime,
Droop, and fade, in little time.
Spring returns, but not our bloom ;
Still 'tis winter in the tomb.

Jan. 1784.

EPITAPH ON DR. JOHNSON.

HERE Johnson lies—a sage by all allow'd,
Whom to have bred may well make England proud,
Whose prose was eloquence, by wisdom taught,
The graceful vehicle of virtuous thought;
Whose verse may claim—grave, masculine, and strong,
Superior praise to the mere poet's song;
Who many a noble gift from heaven possess'd,
And faith at last, alone worth all the rest.
O man, immortal by a double prize,
By fame on earth—by glory in the skies!

Jan. 1785.

TO MISS C——, ON HER BIRTHDAY.

How many between east and west
Disgrace their parent earth,
Whose deeds constrain us to detest
The day that gave them birth!
Not so when Stella's natal morn
Revolving months restore,
We can rejoice that she was born,
And wish her born once more!

1786.

GRATITUDE.

ADDRESSED TO LADY HESKETH.

This cap, that so stately appears,
With ribbon-bound tassel on high,
Which seems by the crest that it rears
Ambitious of brushing the sky:
This cap to my cousin I owe,
She gave it, and gave me beside,
Wreath'd into an elegant bow,
The ribbon with which it is tied.

This wheel-footed studying chair,
Contrived both for toil and repose,
Wide-elbow'd, and wadded with hair,
In which I both scribble and doze,
Bright-studded to dazzle the eyes,
And rival in lustre of that
In which, or astronomy lies,
Fair Cassiopeïa sat:

These carpets, so soft to the foot,
Caledonia's traffic and pride!
Oh spare them, ye knights of the boot
Escaped from a cross-country ride!
This table and mirror within,
Secure from collision and dust,
At which I oft shave cheek and chin,
And periwig nicely adjust:

This movable structure of shelves,
For its beauty admired and its use,
And charged with octavos and twelves,
The gayest I had to produce;
Where, flaming in scarlet and gold,
My poems enchanted I view,
And hope, in due time, to behold
My Iliad and Odyssey too:

This china, that decks the alcove,
Which here people call a buffet,
But what the gods call it above
Has ne'er been reveal'd to us yet:
These curtains, that keep the room warm
Or cool, as the season demands,
Those stoves that for pattern and form
Seem the labour of Mulciber's hands.

All these are not half that I owe
To one, from our earliest youth
To me ever ready to show
Benignity, friendship, and truth;
For time, the destroyer declared
And foe of our perishing kind,
If even her face he has spared,
Much less could he alter her mind.

Thus compass'd about with the goods
And chattels of leisure and ease,
I indulge my poetical moods
In many such fancies as these;

And fancies I fear they will seem—
Poets' goods are not often so fine;
The poets will swear that I dream
When I sing of the splendour of mine.

1786.

LINES COMPOSED FOR A MEMORIAL OF ASHLEY COWPER, ESQ.

IMMEDIATELY AFTER HIS DEATH, BY HIS NEPHEW WILLIAM OF WESTON.

Farewell! endued with all that could engage
All hearts to love thee, both in youth and age!
In prime of life, for sprightliness enroll'd
Among the gay, yet virtuous as the old;

In life's last stage, (O blessings rarely found!)
Pleasant as youth with all its blossoms crown'd;
Through every period of this changeful state
Unchanged thyself—wise, good, affectionate!

Marble may flatter, and lest this should seem
O'ercharged with praises on so dear a theme,
Although thy worth be more than half suppress,
Love shall be satisfied, and veil the rest.

June, 1788.

ON THE QUEEN'S VISIT TO LONDON,

THE NIGHT OF THE SEVENTEENTH OF MARCH, 1789.

When, long sequester'd from his throne,
George took his seat again,
By right of worth, not blood alone,
Entitled here to reign,

Then loyalty, with all his lamps
New trimm'd, a gallant show!
Chasing the darkness and the damps,
Set London in a glow.

'Twas hard to tell, of streets or squares,
Which form'd the chief display,
These most resembling cluster'd stars,
Those the long milky way.

Bright shone the roofs, the domes, the spires,
And rockets flew, self-driven,
To hang their momentary fires
Amid the vault of heaven.

So, fire with water to compare,
The ocean serves, on high
Up-spouted by a whale in air,
To express unwieldy joy.

Had all the pageants of the world
In one procession join'd,
And all the banners been unfurl'd
That heralds e'er design'd,

For no such sight had England's Queen
Forsaken her retreat,
Where George, recover'd, made a scene
Sweet always doubly sweet.

Yet glad she came that night to prove,
A witness undescried,
How much the object of her love
Was loved by all beside.

Darkness the skies had mantled o'er
In aid of her design——
Darkness, O Queen! ne'er call'd before
To veil a deed of thine!

On borrow'd wheels away she flies,
Resolved to be unknown,
And gratify no curious eyes
That night except her own.

Arrived, a night like noon she sees,
And hears the million hum;
As all by instinct, like the bees,
Had known their sovereign come.

Pleased she beheld aloft portray'd,
On many a splendid wall,
Emblems of health and heavenly aid,
And George the theme of all.

Unlike the enigmatic line,
So difficult to spell,
Which shook Belshazzar at his wine
The night his city fell.

Soon watery grew her eyes and dim,
But with a joyful tear,
None else, except in prayer for him,
George ever drew from her.

It was a scene in every part
Like those in fable feign'd,
And seem'd by some magician's art
Created and sustain'd.

But other magic there, she knew,
Had been exerted none,
To raise such wonders in her view,
Save love of George alone.

That cordial thought her spirit cheer'd,
And through the cumbrous throng,
Not else unworthy to be fear'd,
Convey'd her calm along.

So, ancient poets say, serene
The sea-maid rides the waves,
And fearless of the billowy scene
Her peaceful bosom laves.

With more than astronomic eyes
She view'd the sparkling show;
One Georgian star adorns the skies,
She myriads found below.

Yet let the glories of a night
Like that, once seen, suffice,
Heaven grant us no such future sight,
Such previous woe the price!

THE COCK-FIGHTER'S GARLAND.[1]

Muse—hide his name of whom I sing,
Lest his surviving house thou bring
For his sake into scorn,
Nor speak the school from which he drew
The much or little that he knew,
Nor place where he was born.

That such a man once was, may seem
Worthy of record (if the theme
Perchance may credit win)

[1] Written on reading the following in the obituary of the Gentleman's Magazine for April 1789.—"At Tottenham, John Ardesoif, Esq., a young man of large fortune, and in the splendour of his carriages and horses rivalled by few country gentlemen. His table was that of hospitality, where, it may be said, he sacrificed too much to conviviality; but, if he had his foibles, he had his merits also, that far outweighed them. Mr. A. was very fond of cock-fighting, and had a favourite cock, upon which he had won many profitable matches. The last bet he laid upon this cock he lost; which so enraged him, that he had the bird tied to a spit and roasted alive before a large fire. The screams of the miserable animal were so affecting, that some gentlemen who were present attempted to interfere, which so enraged Mr. A. that he seized a poker, and with the most furious vehemence declared that he would kill the first man who interposed; but, in the midst of his passionate asseverations, he fell down dead upon the spot. Such, we are assured, were the circumstances which attended the death of this great pillar of humanity."

For proof to man, what man may prove,
If grace depart, and demons move
The source of guilt within.

This man (for since the howling wild
Disclaims him, man he must be styled)
Wanted no good below,
Gentle he was, if gentle birth
Could make him such, and he had worth,
If wealth can worth bestow.

In social talk and ready jest
He shone superior at the feast,
And qualities of mind,
Illustrious in the eyes of those
Whose gay society he chose,
Possess'd of every kind.

Methinks I see him powder'd red,
With bushy locks his well dress'd head
Wing'd broad on either side,
The mossy rosebud not so sweet;
His steeds superb, his carriage neat,
As luxury could provide.

Can such be cruel? Such can be
Cruel as hell, and so was he;
A tyrant entertain'd
With barbarous sports, whose fell delight
Was to encourage mortal fight
'Twixt birds to battle train'd.

One feather'd champion he possess'd,
His darling far beyond the rest,
Which never knew disgrace,
Nor e'er had fought, but he made flow
The life-blood of his fiercest foe,
The Cæsar of his race.

It chanced at last, when on a day,
He push'd him to the desperate fray,
His courage droop'd, he fled.
The master storm'd, the prize was lost,
And, instant, frantic at the cost,
He doom'd his favourite dead.

He seized him fast, and from the pit
Flew to the kitchen, snatch'd the spit,
And, 'bring me cord,' he cried;
The cord was brought, and, at his word,
To that dire implement the bird,
Alive and struggling, tied.

The horrid sequel asks a veil;
And all the terrors of the tale
That can be, shall be, sunk.—
Led by the sufferer's screams aright
His shock'd companions view the sight,
And him with fury drunk.

All, suppliant, beg a milder fate
For the old warrior at the grate:
He, deaf to pity's call,

Whirl'd round him rapid as a wheel
His culinary club of steel,
Death menacing on all.

But vengeance hung not far remote,
For while he stretch'd his clamorous throat,
And heaven and earth defied,
Big with a curse too closely pent,
That struggled vainly for a vent,
He totter'd, reel'd, and died.

'Tis not for us with rash surmise,
To point the judgment of the skies;
But judgments plain as this,
That, sent for man's instruction, bring
A written label on their wing,
'Tis hard to read amiss.

May, 1789.

TO WARREN HASTINGS, ESQ.

BY AN OLD SCHOOLFELLOW OF HIS AT WESTMINSTER.

Hastings! I knew thee young, and of a mind
While young humane, conversable, and kind,
Nor can I well believe thee, gentle then,
Now grown a villain, and the worst of men.
But rather some suspect, who have oppress'd
And worried thee, as not themselves the best.

VERSES TO THE MEMORY OF DR. LLOYD,[1]

[BY DR. VINCENT.]

Abiit senex, periit senex amabilis,
Quo non fuit jucundior.
Lugete vos, ætas quibus maturior
Senem colendum præstitit,
Seu quando, viribus valentioribus
Firmoque fretus pectore,
Florentiori vos juventute excolens
Curâ fovebat patriâ,
Seu quando fractus, jamque donatus rude,
Vultu sed usque blandulo,
Miscere gaudebat suas facetias
His annuis leporibus.
Vixit probus, puràque simplex indole,
Blandisque comis moribus,
Et dives æquâ mente—charus omnibus,
Unius[2] auctus munere.

[1] I make no apology for the introduction of the following lines, though I have never learned who wrote them. Their elegance will sufficiently recommend them to persons of classical taste and erudition, and I shall be happy if the English version that they have received from me be found not to dishonour them. Affection for the memory of the worthy man whom they celebrate alone prompted me to this endeavour.
W. Cowper.

[2] He was usher and under-master of Westminster near fifty years, and retired from his occupation when he was near seventy, with a handsome pension from the king.

Ite tituli! meritis beatioribus
Aptate laudes debitas!
Nec invidebat ille, si quibus favens
Fortuna plus arriserat.
Placide senex! levi quiescas cespite,
Etsi superbum nec vivo tibi
Decus sit inditum, nec mortuo
Lapis notatus nomine.

THE SAME IN ENGLISH.

Our good old friend is gone, gone to his rest,
Whose social converse was, itself, a feast.
O ye of riper age, who recollect
How once ye loved, and eyed him with respect,
Both in the firmness of his better day,
While yet he ruled you with a father's sway,
And when, impair'd by time and glad to rest,
Yet still with looks in mild complacence drest,
He took his annual seat and mingled here
His sprightly vein with yours—now drop a tear.
In morals blameless as in manners meek,
He knew no wish that he might blush to speak.
But, happy in whatever state below,
And richer than the rich in being so,
Obtain'd the hearts of all, and such a meed
At length from one,[1] as made him rich indeed.

[1] See the note in the Latin copy.

Hence, then, ye titles, hence, not wanted here,
Go, garnish merit in a brighter sphere,
The brows of those whose more exalted lot
He could congratulate, but envied not.
Light lie the turf, good senior! on thy breast,
And tranquil as thy mind was, be thy rest!
Though, living, thou hadst more desert than fame,
And not a stone now chronicles thy name.

TO MRS. THROCKMORTON,

ON HER BEAUTIFUL TRANSCRIPT OF HORACE'S ODE, "AD LIBRUM SUUM."

Maria, could Horace have guess'd
What honour awaited his ode
To his own little volume address'd,
The honour which you have bestow'd;
Who have traced it in characters here,
So elegant, even, and neat,
He had laugh'd at the critical sneer
Which he seems to have trembled to meet.

And sneer, if you please, he had said,
A nymph shall hereafter arise,
Who shall give me, when you are all dead,
The glory your malice denies;
Shall dignity give to my lay,
Although but a mere bagatelle;
And even a poet shall say,
Nothing ever was written so well.

Feb 1790.

TO THE IMMORTAL MEMORY OF THE HALIBUT,

ON WHICH I DINED THIS DAY, MONDAY, APRIL 26, 1784.

WHERE hast thou floated, in what seas pursued
Thy pastime? when wast thou an egg new spawn'd,
Lost in the immensity of ocean's waste?
Roar as they might, the overbearing winds
That rock'd the deep, thy cradle, thou wast safe—
And in thy minikin and embryo state,
Attach'd to the firm leaf of some salt weed,
Didst outlive tempests, such as wrung and rack'd
The joints of many a stout and gallant bark,
And whelm'd them in the unexplored abyss.
Indebted to no magnet and no chart,
Nor under guidance of the polar fire,
Thou wast a voyager on many coasts,
Grazing at large in meadows submarine,
Where flat Batavia just emerging peeps
Above the brine—where Caledonia's rocks
Beat back the surge—and where Hibernia shoots
Her wondrous causeway far into the main.
—Wherever thou hast fed, thou little thought'st,
And I not more, that I should feed on thee.
Peace, therefore, and good health, and much good
To him who sent thee! and success, as oft [fish,
As it descends into the billowy gulf,

To the same drag that caught thee!—Fare thee well!
Thy lot thy brethren of the slimy fin
Would envy, could they know that thou wast doom'd
To feed a bard, and to be praised in verse.

INSCRIPTION FOR A STONE ERECTED AT THE SOWING OF A GROVE OF OAKS AT CHILLINGTON, THE SEAT OF T. GIFFORD, ESQ. 1790.

Other stones the era tell
When some feeble mortal fell;
I stand here to date the birth
Of these hardy sons of earth.
Which shall longest brave the sky,
Storm and frost—these oaks or I?
Pass an age or two away,
I must moulder and decay,
But the years that crumble me
Shall invigorate the tree,
Spread its branch, dilate its size,
Lift its summit to the skies.
Cherish honour, virtue, truth,
So shalt thou prolong thy youth.
Wanting these, however fast
Man be fix'd and form'd to last,
He is lifeless even now,
Stone at heart, and cannot grow.

June, 1790.

ANOTHER,

FOR A STONE ERECTED ON A SIMILAR OCCASION AT THE SAME PLACE IN THE FOLLOWING YEAR.

READER! behold a monument
That asks no sigh or tear,
Though it perpetuate the event
Of a great burial here.

June, 1790. Anno 1791.

TO MRS. KING,

ON HER KIND PRESENT TO THE AUTHOR, A PATCHWORK COUNTERPANE OF HER OWN MAKING.

THE bard, if e'er he feel at all,
Must sure be quicken'd by a call
Both on his heart and head,
To pay with tuneful thanks the care
And kindness of a lady fair
Who deigns to deck his bed.

A bed like this, in ancient time,
On Ida's barren top sublime,
(As Homer's epic shows)
Composed of sweetest vernal flowers,
Without the aid of sun or showers,
For Jove and Juno rose.

Less beautiful, however gay,
Is that which in the scorching day
  Receives the weary swain,
Who, laying his long scythe aside,
Sleeps on some bank with daisies pied,
  Till roused to toil again.

What labours of the loom I see!
Looms numberless have groan'd for me!
  Should every maiden come
To scramble for the patch that bears
The impress of the robe she wears,
  The bell would toll for some.

And oh, what havoc would ensue!
This bright display of every hue
  All in a moment fled!
As if a storm should strip the bowers
Of all their tendrils, leaves, and flowers—
  Each pocketing a shred.

Thanks then to every gentle fair
Who will not come to peck me bare
  As birds of borrow'd feather,
And thanks to one above them all,
The gentle fair of Pertenhall,
  Who put the whole together.

August, 1790.

TRANSLATION OF AN EPIGRAM OF HOMER[1]

Pay me my price, potters! and I will sing.
Attend, O Pallas! and with lifted arm
Protect their oven; let the cups and all
The sacred vessels blacken well, and, baked
With good success, yield them both fair renown
And profit, whether in the market sold
Or streets, and let no strife ensue between us.
But, oh ye potters! if with shameless front
Ye falsify your promise, then I leave
No mischief uninvoked to avenge the wrong.
Come, Syntrips, Smaragus, Sabactes, come,
And Asbetus, nor let your direst dread,
Omodamus, delay! Fire seize your house,
May neither house nor vestibule escape,
May ye lament to see confusion mar
And mingle the whole labour of your hands,
And may a sound fill all your oven, such

[1] No title is prefixed to this piece, but it appears to be a translation of one of the Ἐπιγράμματα of Homer called Ὁ Κάμινος, or the Furnace. Herodotus, or whoever was the Author of the Life of Homer ascribed to him, observes, "certain potters, while they were busied in baking their ware seeing Homer at a small distance, and having heard much said of his wisdom, called to him, and promised him a present of their commodity and of such other things as they could afford, if he would sing to them, when he sang as follows."

As of a horse grinding his provender,
While all your pots and flagons bounce within.
Come hither also, daughter of the sun,
Circe the sorceress, and with thy drugs
Poison themselves, and all that they have made!
Come also, Chiron, with thy numerous troop
Of centaurs, as well those who died beneath
The club of Hercules, as who escaped,
And stamp their crockery to dust; down fall
Their chimney; let them see it with their eyes,
And howl to see the ruin of their art,
While I rejoice; and if a potter stoop
To peep into his furnace, may the fire
Flash in his face and scorch it, that all men
Observe, thenceforth, equity and good faith.

Oct. 1790.

IN
MEMORY OF THE LATE JOHN THORNTON, ESQ.

Poets attempt the noblest task they can,
Praising the Author of all good in man,
And, next, commemorating worthies lost,
The dead in whom that good abounded most.
Thee, therefore, of commercial fame, but more
Famed for thy probity from shore to shore,
Thee, Thornton! worthy in some page to shine,
As honest and more eloquent than mine,

I mourn; or, since thrice happy thou must be,
The world, no longer thy abode, not thee.
Thee to deplore were grief misspent indeed;
It were to weep that goodness has its meed,
That there is bliss prepared in yonder sky,
And glory for the virtuous, when they die.

What pleasure can the miser's fondled hoard,
Or spendthrift's prodigal excess afford,
Sweet as the privilege of healing woe
By virtue suffer'd combating below?
That privilege was thine; Heaven gave thee means
To illumine with delight the saddest scenes,
Till thy appearance chased the gloom, forlorn
As midnight, and despairing of a morn.
Thou hadst an industry in doing good,
Restless as his who toils and sweats for food;
Avarice, in thee, was the desire of wealth
By rust unperishable or by stealth;
And if the genuine worth of gold depend
On application to its noblest end,
Thine had a value in the scales of Heaven
Surpassing all that mine or mint had given.
And, though God made thee of a nature prone
To distribution boundless of thy own,
And still by motives of religious force
Impell'd thee more to that heroic course,
Yet was thy liberality discreet,
Nice in its choice, and of a temper'd heat;
And though in act unwearied, secret still,
As in some solitude the summer rill

Refreshes, where it winds, the faded green,
And cheers the drooping flowers, unheard, unseen.
Such was thy charity; no sudden start,
After long sleep, of passion in the heart,
But steadfast principle, and, in its kind,
Of close relation to the Eternal Mind,
Traced easily to its true source above,
To him whose works bespeak his nature, love.
Thy bounties all were Christian, and I make
This record of thee for the Gospel's sake;
That the incredulous themselves may see
Its use and power exemplified in thee.

Nov. 1790.

THE FOUR AGES.

(A BRIEF FRAGMENT OF AN EXTENSIVE PROJECTED POEM.)

"I COULD be well content, allow'd the use
Of past experience, and the wisdom glean'd
From worn-out follies, now acknowledged such,
To recommence life's trial, in the hope
Of fewer errors, on a second proof!"
Thus, while gray evening lull'd the wind, and call'd
Fresh odours from the shrubbery at my side,
Taking my lonely winding walk, I mused,
And held accustom'd conference with my heart;
When from within it thus a voice replied:

"Couldst thou in truth? and art thou taught
at length
This wisdom, and but this, from all the past?
Is not the pardon of thy long arrear,
Time wasted, violated laws, abuse
Of talents, judgment, mercies, better far
Than opportunity vouchsafed to err
With less excuse, and, haply, worse effect?"
I heard, and acquiesced: then to and fro
Oft pacing, as the mariner his deck,
My gravelly bounds, from self to human kind
I pass'd, and next consider'd—what is man.
Knows he his origin? can he ascend
By reminiscence to his earliest date?
Slept he in Adam? And in those from him
Through numerous generations, till he found
At length his destined moment to be born?
Or was he not, till fashion'd in the womb? [toil'd
Deep mysteries both! which schoolmen must have
To unriddle, and have left them mysteries still.
It is an evil incident to man,
And of the worst, that unexplored he leaves
Truths useful and attainable with ease,
To search forbidden deeps, where mystery lies
Not to be solved, and useless if it might.
Mysteries are food for angels; they digest
With ease, and find them nutriment; but man,
While yet he dwells below, must stoop to glean
His manna from the ground, or starve and die.

May, 1791.

THE RETIRED CAT.[1]

A POET'S cat, sedate and grave
As poet well could wish to have,
Was much addicted to inquire
For nooks to which she might retire,
And where, secure as mouse in chink,
She might repose, or sit and think.
I know not where she caught the trick—
  Nature perhaps herself had cast her
In such a mould philosophique,
  Or else she learnt it of her master.
Sometimes ascending, debonair,
An apple tree, or lofty pear,
Lodged with convenience in the fork,
She watch'd the gardener at his work;
Sometimes her ease and solace sought
In an old empty watering-pot;
There, wanting nothing save a fan,
To seem some nymph in her sedan
Apparel'd in exactest sort,
And ready to be borne to court.

[1] Cowper's partiality to animals is well known. Lady Hesketh, in one of her letters, states, "that he had at one time, five rabbits, three hares, two guinea-pigs, a magpie, a jay, and a starling: besides two goldfinches, two canary birds, and two dogs. It is amazing how the three hares can find room to gambol and frolic (as they certainly do) in his small parlour;" and adds, "I forgot to enumerate a squirrel,

But love of change, it seems, has place
Not only in our wiser race;
Cats also feel, as well as we,
That passion's force, and so did she.
Her climbing, she began to find,
Exposed her too much to the wind,
And the old utensil of tin
Was cold and comfortless within:
She therefore wish'd instead of those
Some place of more serene repose,
Where neither cold might come, nor air
Too rudely wanton with her hair,
And sought it in the likeliest mode
Within her master's snug abode.

A drawer, it chanced, at bottom lined
With linen of the softest kind,
With such as merchants introduce
From India, for the ladies' use,
A drawer impending o'er the rest,
Half open in the topmost chest,
Of depth enough, and none to spare,
Invited her to slumber there;
Puss with delight beyond expression
Survey'd the scene, and took possession.

which he had at the same time, and which used to play with one of the hares continually. One evening, the cat giving one of the hares a sound box on the ear, the hare ran after her, and having caught her, punished her by drumming on her back with her two feet, as hard as drumsticks, till the creature would have actually been killed, had not Mrs. Unwin rescued her."

Recumbent at her ease, ere long,
And lull'd by her own humdrum song,
She left the cares of life behind,
  And slept as she would sleep her last,
When in came, housewifely inclined,
  The chambermaid, and shut it fast;
By no malignity impell'd,
But all unconscious whom it held.
  Awaken'd by the shock (cried Puss)
"Was ever cat attended thus?
The open drawer was left, I see,
Merely to prove a nest for me,
For soon as I was well composed,
Then came the maid and it was closed,
How smooth these 'kerchiefs, and how sweet!
Oh what a delicate retreat!
I will resign myself to rest
Till Sol, declining in the west,
Shall call to supper, when, no doubt,
Susan will come and let me out."
  The evening came, the sun descended,
And Puss remain'd still unattended.
The night roll'd tardily away,
(With her indeed 'twas never day),
The sprightly morn her course renew'd,
The evening gray again ensued,
And puss came into mind no more
Than if entomb'd the day before.
With hunger pinch'd, and pinch'd for room,
She now presaged approaching doom,

Nor slept a single wink, or purr'd,
Conscious of jeopardy incurr'd.
That night, by chance, the poet watching,
Heard an inexplicable scratching;
His noble heart went pit-a-pat,
And to himself he said—"What's that?"
He drew the curtain at his side,
And forth he peep'd, but nothing spied.
Yet, by his ear directed, guess'd
Something imprison'd in the chest,
And, doubtful what, with prudent care
Resolved it should continue there.
At length a voice which well he knew,
A long and melancholy mew,
Saluting his poetic ears,
Consoled him and dispell'd his fears:
He left his bed, he trod the floor,
He 'gan in haste the drawers explore,
The lowest first, and without stop
The rest in order to the top.
For 'tis a truth well known to most,
That whatsoever thing is lost,
We seek it, ere it come to light,
In every cranny but the right.
Forth skipp'd the cat, not now replete
As erst with airy self-conceit,
Nor in her own fond apprehension
A theme for all the world's attention,
But modest, sober, cured of all
Her notions hyperbolical,

And wishing for a place of rest
Any thing rather than a chest.
Then stepp'd the poet into bed
With this reflection in his head.

MORAL.

Beware of too sublime a sense
Of your own worth and consequence;
The man who dreams himself so great,
And his importance of such weight,
That all around, in all that's done,
Must move and act for him alone,
Will learn in school of tribulation
The folly of his expectation.

1791.

THE JUDGMENT OF THE POETS.

Two nymphs, both nearly of an age,
Of numerous charms possess'd,
A warm dispute once chanced to wage,
Whose temper was the best.

The worth of each had been complete
Had both alike been mild:
But one, although her smile was sweet,
Frown'd oftener than she smiled.

And in her humour, when she frown'd,
Would raise her voice, and roar,
And shake with fury to the ground
The garland that she wore.

The other was of gentler cast,
From all such frenzy clear,
Her frowns were seldom known to last,
And never proved severe.

To poets of renown in song
The nymphs referr'd the cause,
Who, strange to tell, all judged it wrong,
And gave misplaced applause.

They gentle call'd, and kind and soft,
The flippant and the scold,
And though she changed her mood so soft,
That failing left untold.

No judges, sure, were e'er so mad,
Or so resolved to err—
In short, the charms her sister had
They lavish'd all on her.

Then thus the God whom fondly they
Their great inspirer call,
Was heard, one genial summer's day,
To reprimand them all.

"Since thus ye have combined," he said
"My favourite nymph to slight,
Adorning May, that peevish maid,
With June's undoubted right,

"The minx shall, for your folly's sake,
Still prove herself a shrew,
Shall make your scribbling fingers ache,
And pinch your noses blue."

May, 1791.

YARDLEY OAK.

Survivor sole, and hardly such, of all
That once lived here, thy brethren, at my birth
(Since which I number threescore winters past),
A shatter'd veteran, hollow-trunk'd perhaps,
As now, and with excoriate forks deform,
Relics of ages! could a mind, imbued
With truth from heaven, created thing adore,
I might with reverence kneel, and worship thee.
It seems idolatry with some excuse,
When our forefather druids in their oaks
Imagined sanctity. The conscience, yet
Unpurified by an authentic act
Of amnesty, the meed of blood divine,
Loved not the light, but, gloomy, into gloom
Of thickest shades, like Adam after taste
Of fruit proscribed, as to a refuge, fled.
Thou wast a bauble once, a cup and ball
Which babes might play with; and the thievish jay,
Seeking her food, with ease might have purloin'd
The auburn nut that held thee, swallowing down

Thy yet close-folded latitude of boughs
And all thine embryo vastness at a gulp.
But fate thy growth decreed; autumnal rains
Beneath thy parent tree mellow'd the soil
Design'd thy cradle; and a skipping deer,
With pointed hoof dibbling the glebe, prepared
The soft receptacle, in which, secure,
Thy rudiments should sleep the winter through.
So fancy dreams. Disprove it, if ye can,
Ye reasoners broad awake, whose busy search
Of argument, employ'd too oft amiss,
Sifts half the pleasures of short life away!
Thou fell'st mature; and, in the loamy clod
Swelling with vegetative force instinct,
Didst burst thine egg, as theirs the fabled twins,
Now stars; two lobes, protruding, pair'd exact;
A leaf succeeded, and another leaf,
And, all the elements thy puny growth
Fostering propitious, thou becamest a twig.
Who lived when thou wast such? Oh, couldst
thou speak,
As in Dodona once thy kindred trees
Oracular, I would not curious ask
The future, best unknown, but, at thy mouth
Inquisitive, the less ambiguous past.
By thee I might correct, erroneous oft,
The clock of history, facts and events
Timing more punctual, unrecorded facts
Recovering, and misstated setting right——
Desperate attempt, till trees shall speak again.

Time made thee what thou wast, king of the
woods;
And time hath made thee what thou art—a cave
For owls to roost in. Once thy spreading boughs
O'erhung the champaign; and the numerous flocks
That grazed it stood beneath that ample cope
Uncrowded, yet safe shelter'd from the storm.
No flock frequents thee now. Thou hast outlived
Thy popularity, and art become
(Unless verse rescue thee awhile) a thing
Forgotten, as the foliage of thy youth. [push'd
While thus through all the stages thou hast
Of treeship—first a seedling, hid in grass;
Then twig; then sapling; and, as century roll'd
Slow after century, a giant bulk
Of girth enormous, with moss-cushion'd root
Upheaved above the soil, and sides emboss'd
With prominent wens globose: till at the last
The rottenness, which Time is charged to inflict
On other mighty ones, found also thee.—
What exhibitions various hath the world
Witness'd of mutability in all
That we account most durable below!
Change is the diet on which all subsist,
Created changeable, and change at last
Destroys them. Skies uncertain now the heat
Transmitting cloudless, and the solar beam
Now quenching in a boundless sea of clouds—
Calm and alternate storm, moisture, and drought,
Invigorate by turns the springs of life

In all that live, plant, animal, and man,
And in conclusion mar them. Nature's threads,
Fine passing thought, e'en in their coarsest works,
Delight in agitation, yet sustain
The force that agitates not unimpaired;
But worn by frequent impulse, to the cause
Of their best tone their dissolution owe.
Thought cannot spend itself, comparing still
The great and little of thy lot, thy growth
From almost nullity into a state
Of matchless grandeur, and declension thence,
Slow, into such magnificent decay.
Time was when, settling on thy leaf, a fly
Could shake thee to the root—and time has been
When tempests could not. At thy firmest age
Thou hadst within thy bole solid contents
That might have ribb'd the sides and plank'd the deck
Of some flagg'd admiral; and tortuous arms,
The shipwright's darling treasure, didst present
To the four-quarter'd winds, robust and bold,
Warp'd into tough knee-timber, many a load![1]
But the axe spared thee. In those thriftier days
Oaks fell not, hewn by thousands, to supply
The bottomless demands of contest waged
For senatorial honours. Thus to Time
The task was left to whittle thee away

[1] Knee-timber is found in the crooked arms of oak, which, by reason of their distortion, are easily adjusted to the angle formed where the deck and the ship's sides meet.

With his sly scythe, whose ever-nibbling edge,
Noiseless, an atom, and an atom more,
Disjoining from the rest, has unobserved,
Achieved a labour which had, far and wide,
By man perform'd, made all the forest ring.
  Embowel'd now, and of thy ancient self
Possessing nought but the scoop'd rind that seems
A huge throat calling to the clouds for drink,
Which it would give in rivulets to thy root,
Thou temptest none, but rather much forbidd'st
The feller's toil, which thou couldst ill requite.
Yet is thy root sincere, sound as the rock,
A quarry of stout spurs and knotted fangs,
Which, crook'd into a thousand whimseys, clasp
The stubborn soil, and hold thee still erect.
  So stands a kingdom, whose foundation yet
Fails not, in virtue and in wisdom laid,
Though all the superstructure, by the tooth
Pulverized of venality, a shell
Stands now, and semblance only of itself!
  Thine arms have left thee. Winds have rent
    them off
Long since, and rovers of the forest wild
With bow and shaft have burnt them. Some
    have left
A splinter'd stump bleach'd to a snowy white;
And some, memorial none, where once they grew.
Yet life still lingers in thee, and puts forth
Proof not contemptible of what she can,
Even where death predominates. The spring

Finds thee not less alive to her sweet force
Than yonder upstarts of the neighbouring wood,
So much thy juniors, who their birth received
Half a millennium since the date of thine.

But since, although well qualified by age
To teach, no spirit dwells in thee, nor voice
May be expected from thee, seated here
On thy distorted root, with hearers none,
Or prompter, save the scene, I will perform
Myself the oracle, and will discourse
In my own ear such matter as I may.

One man alone, the father of us all,
Drew not his life from woman; never gazed,
With mute unconsciousness of what he saw,
On all around him; learn'd not by degrees,
Nor owed articulation to his ear;
But, moulded by his Maker into man
At once, upstood intelligent, survey'd
All creatures, with precision understood
Their purport, uses, properties, assign'd
To each his name significant, and, fill'd
With love and wisdom, render'd back to Heaven
In praise harmonious the first air he drew.
He was excused the penalties of dull
Minority. No tutor charged his hand
With the thought-tracing quill, or task'd his mind
With problems. History, not wanted yet,
Lean'd on her elbow, watching Time, whose course
Eventful, should supply her with a theme; . . . .

1791.

TO THE NIGHTINGALE,

WHICH THE AUTHOR HEARD SING ON NEW YEAR'S DAY.

WHENCE is it that, amazed, I hear
From yonder wither'd spray,
This foremost morn of all the year,
The melody of May?

And why, since thousands would be proud
Of such a favour shown,
Am I selected from the crowd
To witness it alone?

Sing'st thou, sweet Philomel, to me,
For that I also long
Have practised in the groves like thee,
Though not like thee in song?

Or sing'st thou, rather, under force
Of some divine command,
Commission'd to presage a course
Of happier days at hand!

Thrice welcome then! for many a long
And joyless year have I,
As thou to-day, put forth my song
Beneath a wintry sky.

But thee no wintry skies can harm,
Who only need'st to sing
To make e'en January charm,
And every season spring.

1792.

LINES WRITTEN IN AN ALBUM

OF MISS PATTY MORE'S, SISTER OF HANNAH MORE.

In vain to live from age to age
While modern bards endeavour,
I write my name in Patty's page,
And gain my point for ever.

W. COWPER.

March 6, 1792.

SONNET TO WILLIAM WILBERFORCE, ESQ.

Thy country, Wilberforce, with just disdain,
Hears thee by cruel men and impious call'd
Fanatic, for thy zeal to loose the inthral'd
From exile, public sale, and slavery's chain.
Friend of the poor, the wrong'd, the fetter-gall'd,
Fear not lest labour such as thine be vain.

Thou hast achieved a part; hast gain'd the ear
Of Britain's senate to thy glorious cause; [pause
Hope smiles, joy springs, and, though cold caution
And weave delay, the better hour is near
That shall remunerate thy toils severe
By peace for Afric, fenced with British laws.

Enjoy what thou hast won, esteem and love
From all the just on earth and all the blest above.

April 16, 1792.

EPIGRAM.

PRINTED IN THE NORTHAMPTON MERCURY.

To purify their wine, some people bleed
A lamb into the barrel, and succeed;
No nostrum, planters say, is half so good
To make fine sugar as a negro's blood.
Now lambs and negroes both are harmless things,
And thence perhaps this wondrous virtue springs,
'Tis in the blood of innocence alone—
Good cause why planters never try their own.

TO DR. AUSTIN, OF CECIL STREET, LONDON.

Austin! accept a grateful verse from me,
The poet's treasure, no inglorious fee.
Loved by the Muses, thy ingenuous mind
Pleasing requital in my verse may find;
Verse oft has dash'd the scythe of Time aside,
Immortalizing names which else had died:
And O! could I command the glittering wealth
With which sick kings are glad to purchase health!
Yet, if extensive fame, and sure to live,
Were in the power of verse like mine to give,
I would not recompense his art with less,
Who, giving Mary health, heals my distress.
Friend of my friend![1] I love thee tho' unknown,
And boldly call thee, being his, my own.

May 26, 1792.

[1] Hayley.

SONNET TO GEORGE ROMNEY, ESQ.

ON HIS PICTURE OF ME IN CRAYONS, DRAWN AT EARTHAM IN THE 61ST YEAR OF MY AGE, AND IN THE MONTHS OF AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER 1792.

Romney, expert infallibly to trace
On chart or canvas, not the form alone
And semblance, but, however faintly shown,
The mind's impression too on every face—
With strokes that time ought never to erase,
Thou hast so pencil'd mine, that though I own
The subject worthless, I have never known
The artist shining with superior grace.

But this I mark—that symptoms none of woe
In thy incomparable work appear.
Well—I am satisfied it should be so,
Since, on maturer thought, the cause is clear;

For in my looks what sorrow couldst thou see
When I was Hayley's guest, and sat to thee?

October, 1792.

MARY AND JOHN.

If John marries Mary, and Mary alone,
'Tis a very good match between Mary and John.
Should John wed a score, Oh, the claws and the
scratches!
It can't be a match:—'tis a bundle of matches.

EPITAPH ON MR. CHESTER, OF CHICHELEY.

Tears flow, and cease not, where the good man lies,
Till all who know him follow to the skies.
Tears therefore fall where Chester's ashes sleep;
Him wife, friends, brothers, children, servants, weep;—
And justly—few shall ever him transcend
As husband, parent, brother, master, friend.

April, 1793.

TO MY COUSIN, ANNE BODHAM,

ON RECEIVING FROM HER A NETWORK PURSE, MADE BY HERSELF.

My gentle Anne, whom heretofore,
When I was young, and thou no more
Than plaything for a nurse,
I danced and fondled on my knee,
A kitten both in size and glee,
I thank thee for my purse.

Gold pays the worth of all things here;
But not of love;—that gem's too dear
For richest rogues to win it;
I, therefore, as a proof of love,
Esteem thy present far above
The best things kept within it.

May 4, 1793.

INSCRIPTION FOR A HERMITAGE IN THE AUTHOR'S GARDEN.

THIS cabin, Mary, in my sight appears,
Built as it has been in our waning years,
A rest afforded to our weary feet,
Preliminary to—the last retreat.

May, 1793.

TO MRS. UNWIN.

MARY! I want a lyre with other strings,
Such aid from heaven as some have feign'd they drew,
An eloquence scarce given to mortals, new
And undebased by praise of meaner things,
That, ere through age or woe I shed my wings,
I may record thy worth with honour due,
In verse as musical as thou art true,
And that immortalizes whom it sings.
But thou hast little need. There is a book
By seraphs writ with beams of heavenly light,
On which the eyes of God not rarely look,
A chronicle of actions just and bright;
There all thy deeds, my faithful Mary, shine,
And, since thou own'st that praise, I spare thee mine.

May, 1793.

TO JOHN JOHNSON, ON HIS PRESENTING ME WITH AN ANTIQUE BUST OF HOMER.

Kinsman beloved, and as a son, by me!
When I behold this fruit of thy regard,
The sculptured form of my old favourite bard,
I reverence feel for him, and love for thee. [be
Joy too and grief. Much joy that there should
Wise men and learn'd, who grudge not to reward
With some applause my bold attempt and hard,
Which others scorn; critics by courtesy.
The grief is this, that, sunk in Homer's mine,
I lose my precious years, now soon to fail
Handling his gold, which, howsoe'er it shine,
Proves dross when balanced in the Christian scale.
Be wiser thou—like our forefather Donne,
Seek heavenly wealth, and work for God alone.

May, 1793.

TO A YOUNG FRIEND.

ON HIS ARRIVING AT CAMBRIDGE WET WHEN NO RAIN HAD FALLEN THERE.

If Gideon's fleece, which drench'd with dew he found
While moisture none refresh'd the herbs around,
Might fitly represent the church endow'd
With heavenly gifts to heathens not allow'd;

In pledge, perhaps, of favours from on high,
Thy locks were wet when others' locks were dry.
Heaven grant us half the omen—may we see
Not drought on others, but much dew on thee!

May, 1793.

A TALE.[1]

In Scotland's realms, where trees are few,
Nor even shrubs abound;
But where, however bleak the view,
Some better things are found.

For husband there and wife may boast
Their union undefiled,
And false ones are as rare almost
As hedgerows in the wild.

In Scotland's realm forlorn and bare
The history chanced of late—
This history of a wedded pair,
A chaffinch and his mate.

[1] This tale is founded on an article which appeared in the Buckinghamshire Herald, for Saturday, June 1, 1793:—"Glasgow, May, 23. In a block, or pulley, near the head of the mast of a gabert, now lying at the Broomielaw, there is a chaffinch's nest and four eggs. The nest was built while the vessel lay at Greenock, and was followed hither by both birds. Though the block is occasionally lowered for the inspection of the curious, the birds have not forsaken the nest. The cock, however, visits the nest but seldom, while the hen never leaves it, but when she descends to the hull for food."

The spring drew near, each felt a breast
With genial instinct fill'd;
They pair'd and would have built a nest,
But found not where to build.

The heaths uncover'd and the moors
Except with snow and sleet,
Sea-beaten rocks and naked shores
Could yield them no retreat.

Long time a breeding place they sought,
Till both grew vex'd and tired;
At length a ship arriving brought
The good so long desired.

A ship?—could such a restless thing
Afford them place of rest?
Or was the merchant charged to bring
The homeless birds a nest?

Hush—silent hearers profit most—
This racer of the sea
Proved kinder to them than the coast,
It served them with a tree.

But such a tree! 'twas shaven deal,
The tree they call a mast,
And had a hollow with a wheel
Through which the tackle pass'd.

Within that cavity aloft
Their roofless home they fix'd,
Form'd with materials neat and soft,
Bents, wool, and feathers mix'd.

Four ivory eggs soon pave its floor
With russet specks bedight—
The vessel weighs, forsakes the shore,
And lessens to the sight.

The mother-bird is gone to sea,
As she had changed her kind
But goes the male? Far wiser, he
Is doubtless left behind.

No—soon as from ashore he saw
The winged mansion move,
He flew to reach it, by a law
Of never failing love.

Then, perching at his consort's side,
Was briskly borne along,
The billows and the blast defied,
And cheer'd her with a song.

The seaman with sincere delight
His feather'd shipmates eyes,
Scarce less exulting in the sight
Than when he tows a prize.

For seamen much believe in signs,
And from a chance so new
Each some approaching good divines,
And may his hopes be true!

Hail, honour'd land! a desert where
Not even birds can hide,
Yet parent of this loving pair
Whom nothing could divide.

And ye who, rather than resign
Your matrimonial plan,
Were not afraid to plough the brine
In company with man.

For whose lean country much disdain
We English often show,
Yet from a richer nothing gain
But wantonness and woe.

Be it your fortune, year by year,
The same resource to prove,
And may ye, sometimes landing here,
Instruct us how to love!

June, 1793.

A SPANIEL, CALLED BEAU, KILLING A YOUNG BIRD.

A SPANIEL, Beau, that fares like you,
Well fed, and at his ease,
Should wiser be than to pursue
Each trifle that he sees.

But you have kill'd a tiny bird,
Which flew not till to-day,
Against my orders, whom you heard
Forbidding you the prey.

Nor did you kill that you might eat
And ease a doggish pain,
For him, though chased with furious heat,
You left where he was slain.

Nor was he of the thievish sort,
Or one whom blood allures,
But innocent was all his sport
Whom you have torn for yours.

My dog! what remedy remains,
Since, teach you all I can,
I see you, after all my pains,
So much resemble man?

July 15, 1793.

BEAU'S REPLY.

Sir, when I flew to seize the bird
In spite of your command,
A louder voice than yours I heard,
And harder to withstand.

You cried—Forbear—but in my breast
A mightier cried—Proceed!—
'Twas nature, Sir, whose strong behest
Impell'd me to the deed.

Yet, much as nature I respect,
I ventured once to break
(As you perhaps may recollect)
Her precept for your sake;

And when your linnet on a day,
Passing his prison door,
Had flutter'd all his strength away,
And panting press'd the floor,

Well knowing him a sacred thing,
Not destined to my tooth,
I only kiss'd his ruffled wing,
And lick'd his feathers smooth.

Let my obedience then excuse
My disobedience now,
Nor some reproof yourself refuse
From your aggrieved bow-wow:

If killing birds be such a crime
(Which I can hardly see)
What think you, Sir, of killing time
With verse address'd to me!

TO WILLIAM HAYLEY, ESQ.

Dear architect of fine chateaux in air,
Worthier to stand for ever, if they could,
Than any built of stone, or yet of wood,
For back of royal elephant to bear!

O for permission from the skies to share,
Much to my own, though little to thy good,
With thee (not subject to the jealous mood!)
A partnership of literary ware!

But I am bankrupt now; and doom'd henceforth
To drudge, in descant dry, on others' lays;
Bards, I acknowledge, of unequal'd worth!
But what is commentators' happiest praise?

That he has furnish'd lights for other eyes,
Which they who need them use, and then despise.

June 29, 1793.

ANSWER

To Stanzas addressed to Lady Hesketh, by Miss Catherine Fanshawe, in returning a Poem of Mr. Cowper's, lent to her, on condition she should neither show it, nor take a Copy.

To be remember'd thus is fame,
And in the first degree;
And did the few like her the same,
The press might sleep for me.

So Homer, in the memory stored
Of many a Grecian belle,
Was once preserved—a richer hoard,
But never lodged so well.

ON FLAXMAN'S PENELOPE.

The suitors sinn'd, but with a fair excuse,
Whom all this elegance might well seduce;
Nor can our censure on the husband fall,
Who, for a wife so lovely, slew them all.

September, 1793.

TO THE SPANISH ADMIRAL COUNT GRAVINA.

ON HIS TRANSLATING THE AUTHOR'S SONG ON A ROSE INTO ITALIAN VERSE.

My rose, Gravina, blooms anew,
And steep'd not now in rain,
But in Castalian streams by you,
Will never fade again.

1793.

TO MARY.

The twentieth year is well nigh past
Since first our sky was overcast;
Ah would that this might be the last!
My Mary!

Thy spirits have a fainter flow,
I see thee daily weaker grow——
'Twas my distress that brought thee low,
My Mary!

Thy needles, once a shining store,
For my sake restless heretofore,
Now rust disused, and shine no more;
My Mary!

For though thou gladly wouldst fulfil
The same kind office for me still,
Thy sight now seconds not thy will,
My Mary!

But well thou play'dst the housewife's part,
And all thy threads with magic art
Have wound themselves about this heart,
My Mary!

Thy indistinct expressions seem
Like language utter'd in a dream;
Yet me they charm, whate'er the theme,
My Mary!

Thy silver locks, once auburn bright,
Are still more lovely in my sight
Than golden beams of orient light,
My Mary!

For, could I view nor them nor thee,
What sight worth seeing could I see?
The sun would rise in vain for me,
My Mary!

Partakers of thy sad decline,
Thy hands their little force resign;
Yet gently press'd, press gently mine,
My Mary!

Such feebleness of limbs thou provest,
That now at every step thou movest
Upheld by two; yet still thou lovest,
My Mary!

And still to love, though press'd with ill,
In wintry age to feel no chill,
With me is to be lovely still,
My Mary!

But ah! by constant heed I know,
How oft the sadness that I show
Transforms thy smiles to looks of woe,
My Mary!

And should my future lot be cast
With much resemblance of the past,
Thy worn-out heart will break at last,
My Mary!

Autumn of 1793.

MONTES GLACIALES, IN OCEANO GERMANICO NATANTES.

En, quæ prodigia, ex oris allata remotis,
Oras adveniunt pavefacta per æquora nostras!
Non equidem priscæ sæclum rediisse videtur
Pyrrhæ, cum Proteus pecus altos visere montes
Et sylvas, egit. Sed tempora vix leviora
Adsunt, evulsi quando radicitùs alti
In mare descendunt montes, fluctusque pererrant.
Quid verò hoc monstri est magis et mirabile visu?
Splendentes video, ceu pulchro ex ære vel auro
Conflatos, rutilisque accinctos undique gemmis,
Baccâ cæruleâ, et flammas imitante pyropo.
Ex oriente adsunt, ubi gazas optima tellus
Parturit omnigenas, quibus æva per omnia sumptu
Ingenti finxêre sibi diademata reges?
Vix hoc crediderim. Non fallunt talia acutos

Mercatorum oculos: prius et quàm littora Gangis
Liquissent, avidis gratissima præda fuissent.
Ortos unde putemus? An illos Ves'vius atrox
Protulit, ignivomisve ejecit faucibus Ætna?
Luce micant propriâ, Phœbive, per aëra purum
Nunc stimulantis equos, argentea tela retorquent?
Phœbi luce micant. Ventis et fluctibus altis
Appulsi, et rapidis subter currentibus undis,
Tandem non fallunt oculos. Capita alta videre est
Multâ onerata nive et canis conspersa pruinis.
Cætera sunt glacies. Procul hinc, ubi bruma ferè omnes
Contristat menses, portenta hæc horrida nobis
Illa strui voluit. Quoties de culmine summo
Clivorum fluerunt in littora prona, solutæ
Sole, nives, propero tendentes in mare cursu,
Illa gelu fixit. Paulatim attollere sese
Mirum cœpit opus; glacieque ab origine rerum
In glaciem aggestâ sublimes vertice tandem
Æquavit montes, non crescere nescia moles.
Sic immensa diu stetit, æternumque stetisset
Congeries, hominum neque vi neque mobilis arte,
Littora ni tandem declivia deseruisset,
Pondere victa suo. Dilabitur. Omnia circum
Antra et saxa gemunt, subito concussa fragore,
Dum ruit in pelagum, tanquam studiosa natandi,
Ingens tota strues. Sic Delos dicitur olim,
Insula, in Ægæo fluitâsse erratica ponto.
Sed non ex glacie Delos; neque torpida Delum
Bruma inter rupes genuit nudum sterilemque.

Sed vestita herbis erat illa, ornataque nunquam
Deciduâ lauro; et Delum dilexit Apollo.
At vos, errones horrendi, et caligine digni
Cimmeriâ, Deus idem odit. Natalia vestra,
Nubibus involvens frontem, non ille tueri
Sustinuit. Patrium vos ergo requirite cælum!
Ite! Relite! Timete moras; ne lenitèr austro
Spirante, et nitidas Phœbo jaculante sagittas
Hostili vobis, pereatis gurgite misti!

March 11, 1799.

ON THE ICE ISLANDS, SEEN FLOATING IN THE GERMAN OCEAN.

What portents, from what distant region ride,
Unseen till now in ours, the astonish'd tide?
In ages past, old Proteus, with his droves
Of sea-calves, sought the mountains and the groves.
But now, descending whence of late they stood,
Themselves the mountains seem to rove the flood
Dire times were they, full charged with human woes
And these, scarce less calamitous than those.
What view we now? More wondrous still! Behold!
Like burnish'd brass they shine, or beaten gold;
And all around the pearl's pure splendour show,
And all around the ruby's fiery glow.
Come they from India, where the burning earth,
All bounteous, gives her richest treasures birth;

And where the costly gems, that beam around
The brows of mightiest potentates, are found?
No. Never such a countless dazzling store
Had left unseen the Ganges' peopled shore.
Rapacious hands, and ever watchful eyes,
Should sooner far have mark'd and seized the prize
Whence sprang they then? Ejected have they come
From Vesuvius', or from Etna's burning womb?
Thus shine they self-illumed, or but display
The borrow'd splendours of a cloudless day?
With borrow'd beams they shine. The gales that breathe
Now landward, and the current's force beneath,
Have borne them nearer: and the nearer sight,
Advantaged more, contemplates them aright.
Their lofty summits crested high they show,
With mingled sleet, and long-incumbent snow.
The rest is ice. Far hence, where, most severe,
Bleak winter well nigh saddens all the year,
Their infant growth began. He bade arise
Their uncouth forms, portentous in our eyes.
Oft as dissolved by transient suns, the snow
Left the tall cliff, to join the flood below;
He caught, and curdled with a freezing blast
The current, ere it reach'd the boundless waste.
By slow degrees uprose the wondrous pile,
And long successive ages roll'd the while;
Till, ceaseless in its growth, it claim'd to stand,
Tall as its rival mountains on the land.
Thus stood, and, unremovable by skill

Or force of man, had stood the structure still,
But that, though firmly fix'd, supplanted yet
By pressure of its own enormous weight,
It left the shelving beach—and, with a sound
That shook the bellowing waves and rocks around,
Self-launch'd, and swiftly, to the briny wave,
As if instinct with strong desire to lave,
Down went the ponderous mass. So bards of old
How Delos swam the Ægean deep have told.
But not of ice was Delos. Delos bore
Herb, fruit, and flower. She, crown'd with laurel, wore,
E'en under wintry skies, a summer smile;
And Delos was Apollo's favourite isle.
But, horrid wanderers of the deep, to you
He deems Cimmerian darkness only due.
Your hated birth he deign'd not to survey,
But, scornful, turn'd his glorious eyes away.
Hence, seek your home, nor longer rashly dare
The darts of Phœbus, and a softer air;
Lest ye regret, too late, your native coast,
In no congenial gulf for ever lost!

March 19, 1799.

THE CASTAWAY.

Obscurest night involved the sky,
The Atlantic billows roar'd,
When such a destined wretch as I,
Wash'd headlong from on board,

Of friends, of hope, of all bereft,
His floating home for ever left.

No braver chief could Albion boast
Than he with whom he went,
Nor ever ship left Albion's coast
With warmer wishes sent.
He loved them both, but both in vain;
Nor him beheld, nor her again.

Not long beneath the whelming brine,
Expert to swim he lay;
Nor soon he felt his strength decline,
Or courage die away:
But waged with death a lasting strife,
Supported by despair of life.

He shouted; nor his friends had fail'd
To check the vessel's course,
But so the furious blast prevail'd,
That, pitiless perforce,
They left their outcast mate behind,
And scudded still before the wind.

Some succour yet they could afford;
And, such as storms allow,
The cask, the coop, the floated cord,
Delay'd not to bestow;
But he, they knew, nor ship nor shore,
Whate'er they gave, should visit more.

Nor, cruel as it seem'd, could he
  Their haste himself condemn,
Aware that flight, in such a sea,
  Alone could rescue them:
Yet bitter felt it still to die
Deserted, and his friends so nigh.

He long survives, who lives an hour
  In ocean, self-upheld:
And so long he, with unspent power,
  His destiny repell'd:
And ever, as the minutes flew,
Entreated help, or cried—"Adieu!"

At length, his transient respite past,
  His comrades, who before
Had heard his voice in every blast,
  Could catch the sound no more:
For then, by toil subdued, he drank
The stifling wave, and then he sank.

No poet wept him; but the page
  Of narrative sincere,
That tells his name, his worth, his age,
  Is wet with Anson's tear:
And tears by bards or heroes shed
Alike immortalize the dead.

I therefore purpose not, or dream,
  Descanting on his fate,
To give the melancholy theme
  A more enduring date:

But misery still delights to trace
Its semblance in another's case.

No voice divine the storm allay'd,
No light propitious shone;
When, snatch'd from all effectual aid,
We perish'd, each alone:
But I beneath a rougher sea,
And whelm'd in deeper gulfs than he.

March 20, 1799.

THE SALAD, BY VIRGIL.

The winter night now well nigh worn away,
The wakeful cock proclaim'd approaching day,
When Simulus, poor tenant of a farm
Of narrowest limits, heard the shrill alarm,
Yawn'd, stretch'd his limbs, and anxious to provide
Against the pangs of hunger unsupplied,
By slow degrees his tatter'd bed forsook,
And poking in the dark, explored the nook
Where embers slept with ashes heap'd around,
And with burnt fingers-ends the treasure found.
It chanced that from a brand beneath his nose,
Sure proof of latent fire, some smoke arose;
When trimming with a pin the incrusted tow,
And stooping it towards the coals below,
He toils, with cheeks distended, to excite
The lingering flame, and gains at length a light.

With prudent heed he spreads his hand before
The quivering lamp, and opes his granary door.
Small was his stock, but taking for the day
A measured stint of twice eight pounds away,
With these his mill he seeks. A shelf at hand,
Fix'd in the wall, affords his lamp a stand:
Then baring both his arms—a sleeveless coat
He girds, the rough exuviæ of a goat:
And with a rubber, for that use design'd,
Cleansing his mill within—begins to grind;
Each hand has its employ; labouring amain,
This turns the winch, while that supplies the grain.
The stone revolving rapidly, now glows,
And the bruised corn a mealy current flows;
While he to make his heavy labour light,
Tasks oft his left hand to relieve his right;
And chants with rudest accent, to beguile
His ceaseless toil, as rude a strain the while.
And now, "Dame Cybale, come forth!" he cries;
But Cybale, still slumbering, nought replies.

From Afric she, the swain's sole serving-maid,
Whose face and form alike her birth betray'd.
With woolly locks, lips tumid, sable skin,
Wide bosom, udders flaccid, belly thin,
Legs slender, broad and most misshapen feet,
Chapp'd into chinks, and parch'd with solar heat.
Such, summon'd oft, she came; at his command
Fresh fuel heap'd, the sleeping embers fann'd,
And made in haste her simmering skillet steam,
Replenish'd newly from the neighbouring stream

The labours of the mill perform'd, a sieve
The mingled flour and bran must next receive,
Which shaken oft shoots Ceres through refined,
And better dress'd, her husks all left behind.
This done at once, his future plain repast
Unleaven'd on a shaven board he cast,
With tepid lymph first largely soak'd it all,
Then gather'd it with both hands to a ball,
And spreading it again with both hands wide,
With sprinkled salt the stiffen'd mass supplied;
At length the stubborn substance, duly wrought,
Takes from his palms impress'd the shape it ought,
Becomes an orb—and quarter'd into shares,
The faithful mark of just division bears.
Last, on his hearth it finds convenient space.
For Cybale before had swept the place,
And there, with tiles and embers overspread,
She leaves it—reeking in its sultry bed.

Nor Simulus, while Vulcan thus alone
His part perform'd, proves heedless of his own,
But sedulous, not merely to subdue
His hunger, but to please his palate too,
Prepares more savoury food. His chimney side
Could boast no gammon, salted well and dried,
And hook'd behind him; but sufficient store
Of bundled anise, and a cheese it bore; [strung
A broad round cheese, which, through its centre
With a tough broom twig, in the corner hung;
The prudent hero, therefore, with address
And quick dispatch, now seeks another mess.

Close to his cottage lay a garden ground,
With reeds and osiers sparely girt around:
Small was the spot, but liberal to produce;
Nor wanted aught that serves a peasant's use,
And sometimes e'en the rich would borrow thence,
Although its tillage was his sole expense.
For oft as from his toils abroad he ceased,
Home-bound by weather, or some stated feast,
His debt of culture here he duly paid,
And only left the plough to wield the spade.
He knew to give each plant the soil it needs,
To drill the ground and cover close the seeds;
And could with ease compel the wanton rill
To turn and wind obedient to his will.
There flourish'd starwort, and the branching beet,
The sorrel acid, and the mallow sweet,
The skirret, and the leek's aspiring kind,
The noxious poppy—quencher of the mind!
Salubrious sequel of a sumptuous board
The lettuce, and the long huge-bellied gourd;
But these (for none his appetite control'd
With stricter sway) the thrifty rustic sold;
With broom twigs neatly bound, each kind apart,
He bore them ever to the public mart:
Whence laden still, but with a lighter load,
Of cash well earn'd, he took his homeward road,
Expending seldom, ere he quitted Rome,
His gains in flesh-meat for a feast at home,
There, at no cost, on onions, rank and red,
Or the curl'd endive's bitter leaf he fed:

On scallions sliced, or with a sensual gust,
On rockets—foul provocatives of lust!
Nor even shunn'd with smarting gums to press
Nasturtium—pungent face-distorting mess!
Some such regale now also in his thought,
With hasty steps his garden-ground he sought;
There delving with his hands, he first displaced
Four plants of garlick, large, and rooted fast;
The tender tops of parsley next he culls,
Then the old rue-bush shudders as he pulls;
And coriander last to these succeeds,
That hangs on slightest threads her trembling seeds.
Placed near his sprightly fire, he now demands
The mortar at his sable servant's hands;
When stripping all his garlick first he tore
The exterior coats and cast them on the floor,
Then cast away with like contempt the skin,
Flimsier concealment of the cloves within.
These search'd, and perfect found, he one by one
Rinsed, and disposed within the hollow stone.
Salt added, and a lump of salted cheese,
With his injected herbs he cover'd these,
And tucking with his left his tunic tight,
And seizing fast the pestle with his right,
The garlick bruising first he soon express'd,
And mix'd the various juices of the rest.
He grinds, and by degrees his herbs below,
Lost in each other, their own powers forego,
And with the cheese in compound, to the sight
Nor wholly green appear, nor wholly white.

His nostrils oft the forceful fume resent,
He cursed full oft his dinner for its scent;
Or with wry faces, wiping as he spoke [smoke!"
The trickling tears, cried "Vengeance on the
The work proceeds: not roughly turns he now
The pestle, but in circles smooth and slow;
With cautious hand, that grudges what it spills,
Some drops of olive oil he next instils.
Then vinegar with caution scarcely less,
And gathering to a ball the medley mess,
Last, with two fingers frugally applied,
Sweeps the small remnant from the mortar's side.
And thus complete in figure and in kind,
Obtains at length the salad he design'd.
And now black Cybale before him stands,
The cake drawn newly glowing in her hands,
He glad receives it, chasing far away
All fears of famine for the passing day;
His legs enclosed in buskins, and his head
In its tough casque of leather, forth he led
And yoked his steers, a dull obedient pair,
Then drove afield, and plunged the pointed share.

June, 1799.

TO SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

Dear President, whose art sublime
Gives perpetuity to time,
And bids transactions of a day,
That fleeting hours would waft away

To dark futurity, survive,
And in unfading beauty live,—
You cannot with a grace decline
A special mandate of the Nine—
Yourself, whatever task you choose,
So much indebted to the Muse.
Thus say the sisterhood:—We come—
Fix well your pallet on your thumb,
Prepare the pencil and the tints—
We come to furnish you with hints.
French disappointment, British glory,
Must be the subject of the story.
First strike a curve, a graceful bow,
Then slope it to a point below;
Your outline easy, airy, light,
Fill'd up becomes a paper kite.
Let independence, sanguine, horrid,
Blaze like a meteor in the forehead:
Beneath (but lay aside your graces)
Draw six-and-twenty rueful faces,
Each with a staring, steadfast eye,
Fix'd on his great and good ally.
France flies the kite—'tis on the wing—
Britannia's lightning cuts the string.
The wind that rais'd it, ere it ceases,
Just rends it into thirteen pieces,
Takes charge of every fluttering sheet,
And lays them all at George's feet,
Iberia, trembling from afar,
Renounces the confederate war.

Her efforts and her arts o'ercome,
France calls her shatter'd navies home:
Repenting Holland learns to mourn
The sacred treaties she has torn;
Astonishment and awe profound
Are stamp'd upon the nations round;
Without one friend, above all foes,
Britannia gives the world repose.

ON THE AUTHOR OF LETTERS ON LITERATURE.[1]

The genius of the Augustan age
His head among Rome's ruins rear'd,
And bursting with heroic rage,
When literary Heron appear'd.

Thou hast, he cried, like him of old
Who set the Ephesian dome on fire,
By being scandalously bold,
Attain'd the mark of thy desire.

And for traducing Virgil's name
Shalt share his merited reward;
A perpetuity of fame,
That rots, and stinks, and is abhorr'd.

[1] Nominally by Robert Heron, Esq. but supposes to have been written by John Pinkerton. 8vo. 1785.

STANZAS

ON THE LATE INDECENT LIBERTIES TAKEN WITH THE REMAINS OF MILTON.[1] ANNO 1790.

"Me too, perchance, in future days,
The sculptured stone shall show,
With Paphian myrtle or with bays
Parnassian on my brow.

"But I, or ere that season come,
Escaped from every care,
Shall reach my refuge in the tomb,
And sleep securely there."[2]

So sang, in Roman tone and style,
The youthful bard, ere long
Ordain'd to grace his native isle
With her sublimest song.

Who then but must conceive disdain,
Hearing the deed unblest
Of wretches who have dared profane
His dread sepulchral rest?

[1] The bones of Milton, who lies buried in Cripplegate church, were disinterred; a pamphlet by Le Neve was published at the time, giving an account of what appeared on opening his coffin.

[2] Forsitan et nostros ducat de marmore vultus,
Nectens aut Paphia myrti aut Pernasside lauri
Fronde comas—At ego secura pace quiescam.
Milton in Manso.

Ill fare the hands that heaved the stones[1]
Where Milton's ashes lay,
That trembled not to grasp the bones
And steal his dust away!

O ill requited bard! neglect
Thy living worth repaid,
And blind idolatrous respect
As much affronts thee dead.

August, 1790.

TO THE REVEREND WILLIAM BULL.

June 22, 1782.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

If reading verse be your delight,
'Tis mine as much, or more, to write;
But what we would, so weak is man,
Lies oft remote from what we can.
For instance, at this very time
I feel a wish by cheerful rhyme
To soothe my friend, and, had I power,
To cheat him of an anxious hour;
Not meaning (for I must confess,

[1] Cowper, no doubt, had in his memory the lines said to have been written by Shakspeare on his tomb:

"Good friend, for Jesus' sake forbear
To dig the dust enclosed here.
Blest be the man that spares these stones,
And curst be he that moves my bones."

It were but folly to suppress)
His pleasure, or his good alone,
But squinting partly at my own.
But though the sun is flaming high
In the centre of yon arch, the sky,
And he had once (and who but he?)
The name for setting genius free,
Yet whether poets of past days
Yielded him undeserved praise,
And he by no uncommon lot
Was famed for virtues he had not;
Or whether, which is like enough,
His Highness may have taken huff,
So seldom sought with invocation,
Since it has been the reigning fashion
To disregard his inspiration,
I seem no brighter in my wits,
For all the radiance he emits,
Than if I saw, through midnight vapour,
The glimmering of a farthing taper.
Oh for a succedaneum, then,
To accelerate a creeping pen!
Oh for a ready succedaneum,
Quod caput, cerebrum, et cranium
Pondere liberet exoso,
Et morbo jam caliginoso!
'Tis here; this oval box well fill'd
With best tobacco, finely mill'd,
Beats all Anticyra's pretences
To disengage the encumber'd senses.

Oh Nymph of transatlantic fame,
Where'er thine haunt, whate'er thy name,
Whether reposing on the side
Of Oroonoquo's spacious tide,
Or listening with delight not small
To Niagara's distant fall,
'Tis thine to cherish and to feed
The pungent nose-refreshing weed,
Which, whether pulverized it gain
A speedy passage to the brain,
Or whether, touch'd with fire, it rise
In circling eddies to the skies,
Does thought more quicken and refine
Than all the breath of all the Nine—
Forgive the bard, if bard he be,
Who once too wantonly made free,
To touch with a satiric wipe
That symbol of thy power, the pipe;
So may no blight infest thy plains,
And no unseasonable rains;
And so may smiling peace once more
Visit America's sad shore;
And thou, secure from all alarms
Of thundering drums and glittering arms,
Rove unconfined beneath the shade
Thy wide expanded leaves have made;
So may thy votaries increase,
And fumigation never cease.
May Newton with renew'd delights
Perform thine odoriferous rites,

While clouds of incense half divine
Involve thy disappearing shrine;
And so may smoke-inhaling Bull
Be always filling, never full.

MONUMENTAL INSCRIPTION TO WILLIAM NORTHCOT.

Hic sepultus est
Inter suorum lacrymas
GULIELMUS NORTHCOT,
GULIELMI et MARIÆ filius
Unicus, unicè dilectus,
Qui floris ritu succisus est semihiantis,
Aprilis die septimo,
1780, Æt. 10.

Care, vale! Sed non æternùm, care, valeto!
Namque iterùm, tecum, sim modò dignus, ero.
Tum nihil amplexus poterit divellere nostros,
Nec tu marcesces, nec lacrymabor ego.

TRANSLATION.

Farewell! "But not for ever," Hope replies,
Trace but his steps and meet him in the skies!
There nothing shall renew our parting pain,
Thou shalt not wither, nor I weep again.

PSALM CXXXVII.

To Babylon's proud waters brought,
In bondage where we lay,
With tears on Sion's Hill we thought,
And sighed our hours away;
Neglected on the willows hung
Our useless harps, while every tongue
Bewailed the fatal day.

Then did the base insulting foe
Some joyous notes demand,
Such as in Sion used to flow
From Judah's happy band;
Alas! what joyous notes have we,
Our country spoiled, no longer free,
And in a foreign land!

O Solyma! if e'er thy praise
Be silent in my song,
Rude and unpleasing be the lays,
And artless be my tongue!
Thy name my fancy still employs;
To thee, great fountain of my joys,
My sweetest airs belong.

Remember, Lord! that hostile sound,
When Edom's children cried,
"Razed be her turrets to the ground,
And humbled be her pride!"

Remember, Lord! and let the foe
The terrors of thy vengeance know,
The vengeance they defied!

Thou, too, great Babylon, shalt fall
A victim to our God;
Thy monstrous crimes already call
For heaven's chastising rod.
Happy who shall thy little ones
Relentless dash against the stones,
And spread their limbs abroad.

IN A LETTER TO C. P. ESQ.

ILL WITH THE RHEUMATISM.

GRANT me the Muse, ye gods! whose humble flight
Seeks not the mountain-top's pernicious height;
Who can the tall Parnassian cliff forsake,
To visit oft the still Lethean lake;
Now her slow pinions brush the silent shore,
Now gently skim the unwrinkled waters o'er,
There dips her downy plumes, thence upward flies,
And sheds soft slumbers on her votary's eyes.

IN A LETTER TO THE SAME.

IN IMITATION OF SHAKESPEARE.

TRUST me the meed of praise, dealt thriftily
From the nice scale of judgment, honors more
Than does the lavish and o'erbearing tide

Of profuse courtesy. Not all the gems
Of India's richest soil at random spread
O'er the gay vesture of some glittering dame,
Give such alluring vantage to the person,
As the scant lustre of a few, with choice
And comely guise of ornament disposed.

SONG.

No more shall hapless Celia's ears
Be fluttered with the cries
Of lovers drown'd in floods of tears,
Or murdered by her eyes;
No serenades to break her rest,
Nor songs her slumbers to molest,
With my fa, la, la.

The fragrant flowers that once would bloom
And flourish in her hair,
Since she no longer breathes perfume
Their odors to repair,
Must fade, alas! and wither now,
As placed on any common brow.
With my fa, la, la,

Her lip, so winning and so meek,
No longer has its charms,
As well she might by whistling seek
To lure us to her arms;

Affected once, 't is real now,
As her forsaken gums may show,
With my fa, la, la.

The down, that, on her cheek so smooth,
So lovely once appeared,
That, too, has left her with her youth,
Or sprouts into a beard;
As fields, so green when newly sown,
With stubble stiff are overgrown,
With my fa, la, la.

Then, Celia, leave your apish tricks,
And change your girlish airs,
For ombre, snuff, and politics,
Those joys that suit your years;
No patches can lost youth recall,
Nor whitewash prop a tumbling wall.
With my fa, la, la.

Drayton, March, 1753.

AN ATTEMPT AT THE MANNER OF WALLER.

Did not thy reason and thy sense,
With most persuasive eloquence,
Convince me that obedience due
None may so justly claim as you,
By right of beauty, you would be
Mistress o'er my heart and me.

Then fear not I should e'er rebel,
My gentle love! I might as well
A forward peevishness put on,
And quarrel with the midday sun,
Or question who gave him a right
To be so fiery and so bright.

Nay, this were less absurd and vain
Than disobedience to thy reign;
His beams are often too severe,
But thou art mild, as thou art fair;
First from necessity we own your sway,
Then scorn our freedom, and by choice obey.

A SONG.

The sparkling eye, the mantling cheek,
The polished front, the snowy neck,
How seldom we behold in one!
Glossy locks, and brow serene,
Venus' smiles, Diana's mien,
All meet in you, and you alone.

Beauty, like other powers, maintains
Her empire, and by union reigns;
Each single feature faintly warms:
But where at once we view displayed
Unblemished grace, the perfect maid,
Our eyes, our ears, our heart alarms.

So when on earth the god of day
Obliquely sheds his tempered ray,
  Through convex orbs the beams transmit,
The beams that gently warmed before,
Collected, gently warm no more,
  But glow with more prevailing heat.

A SONG.

On the green margin of the brook
  Despairing Phyllida reclined,
Whilst every sigh, and every look,
  Declared the anguish of her mind.

"Am I less lovely then?" (she cries,
  And in the waves her form surveyed;)
"Oh yes, I see my languid eyes,
  My faded cheek, my color fled!
These eyes no more like lightning pierced,
These cheeks grew pale, when Damon first
  His Phyllida betrayed.

"The rose he in his bosom wore,
  How oft upon my breast was seen!
And when I kissed the drooping flower,
  Behold, he cried, it blooms again!
The wreath that bound my braided hair,
Himself next day was proud to wear
  At church, or on the green."

While thus sad Phyllida lamented,
Chance brought unlucky Thyrsis on;
Unwillingly the nymph consented,
But Damon first the cheat begun.
She wiped the fallen tears away,
Then sighed and blushed, as who should say,
Ah! Thyrsis, I am won.

UPON A VENERABLE RIVAL.

Full thirty frosts since thou wert young
Have chilled the withered grove,
Thou wretch! and hast thou lived so long,
Nor yet forgot to love?

Ye sages! spite of your pretences
To wisdom, you must own
Your folly frequently commences
When you acknowledge none.

Not that I deem it weak to love,
Or folly to admire;
But ah! the pangs we lovers prove
Far other years require.

Unheeded on the youthful brow
The beams of Phœbus play;
But unsupported Age stoops low
Beneath the sultry ray.

For once, then, if untutored youth,
Youth unapproved by years,
May chance to deviate into truth,
When your experience errs;

For once attempt not to despise
What I esteem a rule:
Who early loves, though young, is wise, —
Who old, though gray, a fool.

THE CERTAINTY OF DEATH.

MORTALS! around your destined heads
Thick fly the shafts of Death,
And lo! the savage spoiler spreads
A thousand toils beneath.

In vain we trifle with our fate;
Try every art in vain;
At best we but prolong the date,
And lengthen out our pain.

Fondly we think all danger fled,
For death is ever nigh;
Outstrips our unavailing speed,
Or meets us as we fly.

Thus the wrecked mariner may strive
Some desert shore to gain;
Secure of life, if he survive
The fury of the main.

But there, to famine doomed a prey,
Finds the mistaken wretch
He but escaped the troubled sea,
To perish on the beach.

Since then in vain we strive to guard
Our frailty from the foe,
Lord, let me live not unprepared
To meet the fatal blow!

OF HIMSELF.

William was once a bashful youth;
His modesty was such,
That one might say (to say the truth)
He rather had too much.

Some said that it was want of sense,
And others want of spirit,
(So blest a thing is impudence,)
While others could not bear it.

But some a different notion had,
And at each other winking,
Observed, that though he little said,
He paid it off with thinking.

Howe'er, it happened, by degrees,
He mended and grew perter;
In company was more at ease,
And dressed a little smarter;

Nay, now and then would look quite gay,
As other people do;
And sometimes said, or tried to say,
A witty thing or so.

He eyed the women, and made free
To comment on their shapes;
So that there was, or seemed to be,
No fear of a relapse.

The women said, who thought him rough,
But now no longer foolish,
The creature may do well enough,
But wants a deal of polish.

At length, improved from head to heel,
'Twere scarce too much to say,
No dancing bear was so genteel,
Or half so *dégagé*.

Now that a miracle so strange
May not in vain be shown,
Let the dear maid who wrought the change
E'er claim him for her own.

AN APOLOGY

FOR NOT SHOWING HER WHAT I HAD WROTE.

Did not my Muse (what can she less?)
Perceive her own unworthiness,
Could she by some well-chosen theme,
But hope to merit your esteem,

She would not thus conceal her lays,
Ambitious to deserve your praise.
But should my Delia take offence,
And frown on her impertinence,
In silence, sorrowing and forlorn,
Would the despairing trifler mourn,
Curse her ill-tuned, unpleasing lute,
Then sigh and sit forever mute.
In secret therefore let her play,
Squandering her idle notes away
In secret as she chants along,
Cheerful and careless in her song;
Nor heeds she whether harsh or clear,
Free from each terror, every fear,
From that, of all most dreaded, free,
The terror of offending thee.

Cutfield, 1752.

DELIA, the unkindest girl on earth,
When I besought the fair,
That favor of intrinsic worth,
A ringlet of her hair,

Refused that instant to comply
With my absurd request,
For reasons she could specify,
Some twenty score at least.

Trust me, my dear, however odd
It may appear to say,

I sought it merely to defraud
Thy spoiler of his prey.

Yet when its sister locks shall fade,
As quickly fade they must,
When all their beauties are decayed
Their gloss, their color, lost, —

Ah then! if haply to my share
Some slender pittance fall,
If I but gain one single hair,
Nor age usurp them all; —

When you behold it still as sleek,
As lovely to the view,
As when it left thy snowy neck, —
That Eden where it grew, —

Then shall my Delia's self declare
That I professed the truth,
And have preserved my little share
In everlasting youth.

At the same place.

This evening, Delia, you and I
Have managed most delightfully,
For with a frown we parted;
Having contrived some trifle that
We both may be much troubled at,
And sadly disconcerted.

Yet well as each performed their part,
We might perceive it was but art,
And that we both intended
To sacrifice a little ease;
For all such petty flaws as these
Are made but to be mended.

You knew, dissembler! all the while,
How sweet it was to reconcile
After this heavy pelt;
That we should gain by this allay
When next we met, and laugh away
The care we never felt.

Happy! when we but seek to endure
A little pain, then find a cure
By double joy requited;
For friendship, like a severed bone,
Improves and joins a stronger tone
When aptly reunited.

WRITTEN IN A QUARREL.

(THE DELIVERY OF IT PREVENTED BY A RECONCILIATION.)

THINK, Delia, with what cruel haste
Our fleeting pleasures move,
Nor heedless thus in sorrow waste
The moments due to love:

Be wise, my fair, and gentle treat
These few that are our friends;
Think, thus abused, what sad regret
Their speedy flight attends!

Sure in those eyes I loved so well,
And wished so long to see,
Anger I thought could never dwell,
Or anger aimed at me.

No bold offence of mine I knew
Should e'er provoke your hate;
And early taught to think you true,
Still hoped a gentler fate.

With kindness bless the present hour,
Or, oh! we meet in vain!
What can we do in absence more
Than suffer and complain?

Fated to ills beyond redress,
We must endure our woe;
The days allowed us to possess,
'Tis madness to forego.

THE SYMPTOMS OF LOVE.

Would my Delia know if I love, let her take
My last thought at night, and the first when I wake;
When my prayers and best wishes preferred for her sake.

Let her guess what I muse on, when rambling alone
I stride o'er the stubble each day with my gun,
Never ready to shoot till the covey is flown.

Let her think what odd whimseys I have in my brain,
When I read one page over and over again,
And discover at last that I read it in vain.

Let her say why so fixed and so steady my look,
Without ever regarding the person who spoke,
Still affecting to laugh, without hearing the joke,

Or why when with pleasure her praises I hear,
(That sweetest of melody sure to my ear,)
I attend, and at once inattentive appear.

And lastly, when summoned to drink to my flame,
Let her guess why I never once mention her name,
Though herself and the woman I love are the same.

See where the Thames, the purest stream
That wavers to the noonday beam,
Divides the vale below;
While like a vein of liquid ore
His waves enrich the happy shore,
Still shining as they flow.

Nor yet, my Delia, to the main
Runs the sweet tide without a stain,

Unsullied as it seems;
The nymphs of many a sable flood
Deform with streaks of oozy mud
The bosom of the Thames.

Some idle rivulets, that feed
And suckle every noisome weed,
A sandy bottom boast;
Forever bright, forever clear,
The trifling shallow rills appear
In their own channel lost.

Thus fares it with the human soul,
Where copious floods of passion roll,
By genuine love supplied;
Fair in itself the current shows,
But ah! a thousand anxious woes
Pollute the noble tide.

These are emotions known to few;
For where at most a vapory dew
Surrounds the tranquil heart,
Then as the triflers never prove
The glad excess of real love,
They never prove the smart.

O then, my life, at last relent!
Though cruel the reproach I sent,
My sorrow was unfeigned;
Your passion, had I loved you not,
You might have scorned, renounced, forgot,
And I had ne'er complained.

While you indulge a groundless fear,
The imaginary woes you bear
Are real woes to me:
But thou art kind, and good thou art,
Nor wilt, by wronging thine own heart,
Unjustly punish me.

How blessed the youth whom fate ordains
A kind relief from all his pains,
In some admired fair;
Whose tenderest wishes find expressed
Their own resemblance in her breast,
Exactly copied there!

What good soe'er the gods dispense,
The enjoyment of its influence
Still on her love depends;
Her love the shield that guards his heart,
Or wards the blow, or blunts the dart
That peevish Fortune sends.

Thus, Delia, while thy love endures,
The flame my happy breast secures
From fortune's fickle power;
Change as she list, she may increase,
But not abate my happiness,
Confirmed by thee before.

Thus while I share her smiles with thee,
Welcome, my love, shall ever be
The favours she bestows;
Yet not on those I found my bliss,
But in the noble ecstasies
The faithful bosom knows.

And when she prunes her wings for flight,
And flutters nimbly from my sight,
Contented I resign
Whate'er she gave; thy love alone
I can securely call my own,
Happy while that is mine.

Berkhamstead.

Bid adieu, my sad heart, bid adieu to thy peace!
Thy pleasure is past, and thy sorrows increase;
See the shadows of evening how far they extend,
And a long night is coming, that never may end;
For the sun is now set that enlivened the scene,
And an age must be past ere it rises again.

Already deprived of its splendour and heat,
I feel thee more slowly, more heavily beat;
Perhaps overstrained with the quick pulse of pleasure,
Thou art glad of this respite to beat at thy leisure;
But the sigh of distress shall now weary thee more
Than the flutter and tumult of passion before.

The heart of a lover is never at rest,
With joy overwhelmed, or with sorrow oppressed;
When Delia is near, all is ecstasy then,
And I even forget I must lose her again:
When absent, as wretched as happy before,
Despairing I cry, "I shall see her no more!"

At Berkhamstead.

WRITTEN AFTER LEAVING HER AT NEW BURNS.

How quick the change from joy to woe!
How checkered is our lot below!
Seldom we view the prospect fair,
Dark clouds of sorrow, pain, and care,
(Some pleasing intervals between,)
Scowl over more than half the scene.
Last week with Delia, gentle maid,
Far hence in happier fields I strayed,
While on her dear enchanting tongue
Soft sounds of grateful welcome hung,
For absence had withheld it long.
"Welcome, my long lost love," she said,
"E'er since our adverse fates decreed
That we must part and I must mourn
Till once more blessed by thy return.
Love, on whose influence I relied
For all the transports I enjoyed,
Has played the cruel tyrant's part
And turned tormentor to my heart;

But let me hold thee to my breast,
Dear partner of my joy and rest,
And not a pain, and not a fear,
Or anxious doubt shall enter there."
Happy, thought I, the favoured youth
Blessed with such undissembled truth!
Five suns successive rose and set,
And saw no monarch in his state,
Wrapped in the blaze of majesty;
So free from every care as I.
Next day the scene was overcast;
Such day till then I never passed,
For on that day, relentless fate
Delia and I must separate.
Yet ere we looked our last farewell,
From her dear lips this comfort fell:
"Fear not that time, where'er we rove,
Or absence, shall abate my love."
And can I doubt, my charming maid,
As unsincere what you have said?
Banished from thee to what I hate,
Dull neighbours, and insipid chat,
No joy to cheer me, none in view,
But the dear hope of meeting you;
And that through passion's optic seen
With ages interposed between.
Blessed with the kind support you give,
'Tis by your promised truth I live;
How deep my woes, how fierce my flame,
You best may tell, who feel the same.

TO DELIA.

ON HER ENDEAVOURING TO CONCEAL HER GRIEF AT PARTING.

Ah! wherefore should my weeping maid suppress
Those gentle signs of undissembled woe?
When from soft love proceeds the deep distress,
Ah! why forbid the willing tears to flow?

Since for my sake each dear translucent drop
Breaks forth, best witness of thy truth sincere,
My lips should drink the precious mixture up,
And ere it falls receive the trembling tear.

Trust me, these symptoms of thy faithful heart,
In absence shall my dearest hope sustain;
Delia! since such thy sorrow that we part,
Such when we meet thy joy shall be again.

Hard is that heart and unsubdued by love
That feels no pain, nor ever heaves a sigh;
Such hearts, the fiercest passions only prove,
Or freeze in cold insensibility.

Oh! then indulge thy grief, nor fear to tell
The gentle source from whence thy sorrows flow;
Nor think it weakness when we love to feel,
Nor think it weakness what we feel to show.

Hope, like the short-lived ray that gleams awhile
Through wintry skies, upon the frozen waste,
Cheers e'en the face of misery to a smile;
But soon the momentary pleasure 's past.

How oft, my Delia, since our last farewell,
(Years that have rolled since that distressful hour,)
Grieved I have said, when most our hopes prevail,
Our promised happiness is least secure.

Oft I have thought the scene of troubles closed,
And hoped once more to gaze upon your charms;
As oft some dire mischance has interposed,
And snatched the expected blessing from my arms.

The seaman thus, his shattered vessel lost,
Still vainly strives to shun the threatening death:
And while he thinks to gain the friendly coast,
And drops his feet, and feels the sands beneath,—

Borne by the wave steep-sloping from the shore,
Back to the inclement deep, again he beats
The surge aside, and seems to tread secure;
And now the refluent wave his baffled toil defeats.

Had you, my love, forbade me to pursue
My fond attempt, disdainfully retired,
And with proud scorn compelled me to subdue
The ill-fated passion by yourself inspired;

Then haply to some distant spot removed,
Hopeless to gain, unwilling to molest
With fond entreaties whom I dearly loved,
Despair or absence had redeemed my rest.

But now, sole partner in my Delia's heart,
Yet doomed far off in exile to complain,
Eternal absence cannot ease my smart,
And hope subsists but to prolong my pain.

Oh then, kind Heaven, be this my latest breath!
Here end my life, or make it worth my care;
Absence from whom we love is worse than death,
And frustrate hope severer than despair.

R. S. S.

All-worshipped Gold! thou mighty mystery!
Say by what name shall I address thee; rather
Our blessing, or our bane? Without thy aid,
The generous pangs of pity but distress
The human heart, that fain would feel the bliss
Of blessing others; and, enslaved by thee,
Far from relieving woes which others feel,
Misers oppress themselves. Our blessing then
With virtue when possessed; without, our bane.
If in my bosom unperceived there lurk
The deep-sown seeds of avarice or ambition,

Blame me, ye great ones, (for I scorn your censure,)
But let the generous and the good commend me;
That to my Delia I direct them all,—
The worthiest object of a virtuous love.
Oh! to some distant scene, a willing exile
From the wild uproar of this busy world,
Were it my fate with Delia to retire;
With her to wander through the sylvan shade
Each morn, or o'er the moss-imbrownèd turf,
Where, blessed as the prime parents of mankind
In their own Eden, we would envy none;
But, greatly pitying whom the world calls happy,
Gently spin out the silken thread of life;
While from her lips attentive I receive
The tenderest dictates of the purest flame,
And from her eyes (where soft complacence sits
Illumined with the radiant beams of sense,)
Tranquillity beyond a monarch's reach.
Forgive me, Heaven, this only avarice
My soul indulges; I confess the crime,
(If to esteem, to covet, such perfection
Be criminal.) Oh, grant me Delia! grant me wealth!
Wealth to alleviate, not increase my wants,
And grant me virtue, without which nor wealth
Nor Delia can avail to make me blessed!

WRITTEN IN A FIT OF ILLNESS.

E. S. S.

In these sad hours a prey to ceaseless pain,
While feverish pulses leap in every vein,
When each faint breath the last short effort seems
Of life just parting from my feeble limbs;
How wild soe'er my wandering thoughts may be,
Still, gentle Delia, still they turn on thee!
At length, if slumbering to a short repose,
A sweet oblivion frees me from my woes,
Thy form appears, thy footsteps I pursue
Through springy vales, and meadows washed in dew;
Thy arm supports me to the fountain's brink,
Where by some secret power forbid to drink,
Gasping with thirst, I view the tempting flood
That flies my touch, or thickens into mud;
Till thine own hand immerged the goblet dips,
And bears it streaming to my burning lips.
There borne aloft on fancy's wing we fly,
Like souls embodied to their native sky;
Now every rock, each mountain, disappears,
And the round earth an even surface wears;
When lo! the force of some resistless weight
Bears me straight down from that pernicious height;
Parting, in vain our struggling arms we close;
Abhorred forms, dire phantoms interpose;

With trembling voice on thy loved name I call;
And gulfs yawn ready to receive my fall.
From these fallacious visions of distress
I wake; nor are my real sorrows less.
Thy absence, Delia, heightens every ill,
And gives e'en trivial pains the power to kill.
Oh! wert thou near me; yet that wish forbear!
'Twere vain, my love, — 'twere vain to wish thee near;
Thy tender heart would heave with anguish too,
And, by partaking, but increase my woe.
Alone I'll grieve, till gloomy sorrow past,
Health, like the cheerful day-spring, comes at last;
Comes fraught with bliss to banish every pain,
Hope, joy, and peace, and Delia in her train!

TO DELIA.

1755.

Me to whatever state the gods assign,
Believe, my love, whatever state be mine,
Ne'er shall my breast one anxious sorrow know,
Ne'er shall my heart confess a real woe,
If to thy share Heaven's choicest blessings fall,
As thou hast virtue to deserve them all.
Yet vain, alas! that idle hope would be
That builds on happiness remote from thee.

Oh! may thy charms, whate'er our fate decrees,
Please, as they must, but let them only please, —
Not like the sun with equal influence shine,
Nor warm with transport any heart but mine.
Ye who from wealth the ill-grounded title boast,
To claim whatever beauty charms you most;
Ye sons of fortune, who consult alone
Her parent's will, regardless of her own, —
Know that a love like ours, a generous flame,
No wealth can purchase, and no power reclaim.
The soul's affection can be only given
Free, unextorted, as the grace of Heaven.
  Is there whose faithful bosom can endure
Pangs fierce as mine, nor ever hope a cure?
Who sighs in absence of the dear loved maid,
Nor summons once indifference to his aid?
Who can, like me, the nice resentment prove,
The thousand soft disquietudes of love;
The trivial strifes that cause a real pain;
The real bliss when reconciled again?
Let him alone dispute the real prize,
And read his sentence in my Delia's eyes;
There shall he read all gentleness and truth,
But not himself, the dear distinguished youth;
Pity for him perhaps they may express, —
Pity, that will but heighten his distress.
But, wretched rival! he must sigh to see
The sprightlier rays of love directed all to me.
  And thou, dear antidote of every pain
Which fortune can inflict, or love ordain.

Since early love has taught thee to despise
What the world's worthless votaries only prize,
Believe, my love! no less the generous god
Rules in my breast, his ever blest abode;
There has he driven each gross desire away,
Directing every wish and every thought to thee!
Then can I ever leave my Delia's arms,
A slave, devoted to inferior charms?
Can e'er my soul her reason so disgrace?
For what blest minister of heavenly race
Would quit that heaven to find a happier place?

DISAPPOINTMENT.

Doomed, as I am, in solitude to waste
The present moments, and regret the past;
Deprived of every joy I valued most,
My friend torn from me, and my mistress lost,
Call not this gloom I wear, this anxious mien,
The dull effect of humour, or of spleen!
Still, still I mourn, with each returning day,
Him snatched by fate in early youth away;[1]
And her — through tedious years of doubt and pain,
Fixed in her choice, and faithful — but in vain!

[1] Sir William Russell, with whom he contracted a close friendship at Westminster School.

O prone to pity, generous, and sincere,
Whose eye ne'er yet refused the wretch a tear;
Whose heart the real claim of friendship knows,
Nor thinks a lover's are but fancied woes;
See me, ere yet my destined course half done,
Cast forth a wanderer on a world unknown!
See me neglected on the world's rude coast,
Each dear companion of my voyage lost!
Nor ask why clouds of sorrow shade my brow,
And ready tears wait only leave to flow!
Why all that soothes a heart from anguish free,
All that delights the happy, palls with me!

ODE.

SUPPOSED TO BE WRITTEN ON THE MARRIAGE OF A FRIEND.

Thou magic lyre, whose fascinating sound
Seduced the savage monsters from their cave,
Drew rocks and trees and forms uncouth around,
And bade wild Hebrus hush his listening wave;
No more thy undulating warblings flow
O'er Thracian wilds of everlasting snow!

Awake to sweeter sounds, thou magic lyre,
And paint a lover's bliss, a lover's pain!
Far nobler triumphs now thy notes inspire,
For see, Eurydice attends thy strain;
Her smile, a prize beyond the conjurer's aim,
Superior to the cancelled breath of fame.

From her sweet brow to chase the gloom of care,
To check the tear that dims the beaming eye,
To bid her heart the rising sigh forbear,
And flush her orient cheek with brighter joy;
In that dear breast soft sympathy to move,
And touch the springs of rapture and of love.

Ah me! how long bewildered and astray,
Lost and benighted, did my footsteps rove,
Till sent by Heaven to cheer my pathless ray,
A star arose, — the radiant star of love.
The God propitious joined our willing hands,
And Hymen wreathed us in his rosy bands.

Yet not the beaming eye, or placid brow,
Or golden tresses, hid the subtle dart;
To charms superior far than those I bow,
And nobler worth enslaves my vanquished heart;
The beauty, elegance, and grace combined,
Which beam transcendent from that angel mind.

While vulgar passions, meteors of a day,
Expire before the chilling blasts of age,
Our holy flame with pure and steady ray,
Its glooms shall brighten, and its pangs assuage;
By Virtue (sacred vestal) fed, shall shine,
And warm our fainting souls with energy divine.

AN ODE.

SECUNDUM ARTEM.

I.

SHALL I begin with *Ah*, or *Oh*?
Be sad? *Oh!* yes. Be glad? *Ah!* no.
Light subjects suit not grave Pindaric ode,
Which walks in metre down the Strophic road.
But let the sober matron wear
Her own mechanic sober air;
Ah me! ill suits, *alas!* the sprightly jig,
Long robes of ermine, or Sir Cloudesley's wig.
Come, placid Dulness, gently come,
And all my faculties benumb;
Let thought turn exile, while the vacant mind
To tricky words and petty phrase confined,
Pumping for trim description's art,
To win the ear, neglects the heart.
So shall thy sister Taste's peculiar sons,
Lineal descendants from the Goths and Huns,
Struck with the true and grand sublime
Of *rhythm* converted into *rhyme*,
Court the quaint Muse, and con her lessons o'er,
When sleep the sluggish waves by Granta's shore;
There shall each poet share and trim,
Stretch, cramp, or lop the verse's limb,
While rebel Wit beholds them with disdain,
And Fancy flies aloft, nor heeds their servile chain.

II.

Oh Fancy, bright aerial maid!
Where have thy vagrant footsteps strayed?
For, *Ah!* I miss thee 'midst thy wonted haunt,
Since silent now the enthusiastic chaunt,
Which erst like frenzy rolled along,
Driven by the impetuous tide of song;
Rushing secure where native genius bore,
Not cautious coasting by the shelving shore.
Hail to the sons of modern Rhyme,
Mechanic dealers in sublime,
Whose lady Muse full wantonly is drest,
In light expression quaint, and tinsel vest,
Where swelling epithets are laid
(Art's ineffectual parade)
As varnish on the cheek of harlot light;
The vest thin sown with profit or delight,
But ill compares with ancient song,
Where Genius poured its flood along;
Yet such is Art's presumptuous idle claim,
She marshals out the way to modern fame;
From Grecian fable's pompous lore
Description's studied, glittering store,
Smooth, soothing sounds, and sweet alternate rhyme,
Clinking, like change of bells, in tingle tangle chime.

III.

The lark shall soar in every ode,
With flowers of light description strewed;
And sweetly, warbling Philomel, shall flow
Thy soothing sadness in mechanic woe.
Trim epithets shall spread their gloss,
While every cell's o'ergrown with moss:
Here oaks shall rise in chains of ivy bound,
There smouldering stones o'erspread the rugged ground.
Here forests brown, and azure hills,
There babbling fonts, and prattling rills;
Here some gay river floats in crisped streams,
While the bright Sun now gilds his morning beams,
Or sinking on his Thetis' breast,
Drives in description down the west.
Oh let me boast, with pride becoming skill,
I crown the summit of Parnassus' hill;
While Taste and Genius shall dispense,
And sound shall triumph over sense;
O'er the gay mead with curious steps I'll stray;
And, like the bee, steal all the sweets away;
Extract its beauty and its power,
From every new poetic flower;
And sweets collected may a wreath compose,
To bind the poet's brow, or please the critic's nose.

LINES WRITTEN UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF DELIRIUM.

Hatred and vengeance — my eternal portion
Scarce can endure delay of execution —
Wait with impatient readiness to seize my
Soul in a moment.

Damned below Judas; more abhorred than he was,
Who for a few pence sold his holy Master!
Twice betrayed Jesus me, the last delinquent,
Deems the profanest.

Man disavows, and Deity disowns me,
Hell might afford my miseries a shelter;
Therefore, Hell keeps her ever-hungry mouths all
Bolted against me.

Hard lot! encompassed with a thousand dangers;
Weary, faint, trembling with a thousand terrors,
I'm called, if vanquished,[1] to receive a sentence
Worse than Abiram's.

Him the vindictive rod of angry justice
Sent quick and howling to the centre headlong;
I, fed[1] with judgment, in a fleshy tomb, am
Buried above ground.

[1] Dr Southey observes that both these passages are evidently corrupt, and that the first should possibly be *in anguish*. The second, although not happily expressed, appears susceptible of explanation. Cowper is comparing his own sentence with that of Abiram, who was sent howling to the centre, while he is kept alive, or fed, by a judgment which dooms him a living death.

ANTI-THELYPHTHORA.[1]

A TALE, IN VERSE.

Ah miser
Quantâ laboras in Charybdi.
HORACE, Lib. I. Ode 27.

AIRY DEL CASTRO was as bold a knight
As ever earned a lady's love in fight.
Many he sought, but one above the rest
His tender heart victoriously impressed;
In fairy land was born the matchless dame,
The land of dreams, Hypothesis her name.
There Fancy nursed her in ideal bowers,
And laid her soft in amaranthine flowers;
Delighted with her babe, the enchantress smiled,
And graced with all her gifts the favourite child.
Her wooed Sir Airy, by meandering streams,
In daily musings and in nightly dreams;
With all the flowers he found, he wove in haste
Wreaths for her brow, and girdles for her waist;
His time, his talents, and his ceaseless care
All consecrated to adorn the fair;
No pastime but with her he deigned to take,
And, — if he studied, studied for her sake.
And, for Hypothesis was somewhat long,
Nor soft enough to suit a lover's tongue,

[1] This poem was printed anonymously, in quarto, in February, 1781.

He called her Posy, with an amorous art,
And graved it on a gem, and wore it next his heart.
But she, inconstant as the beams that play
On rippling waters in an April day,
With many a freakish trick deceived his pains,
To pathless wilds and unfrequented plains
Enticed him from his oaths of knighthood far,
Forgetful of the glorious toils of war.
'Tis thus the tenderness that love inspires
Too oft betrays the votaries of his fires;
Borne far away on elevated wings,
They sport like wanton doves in airy rings,
And laws and duties are neglected things.
Nor he alone addressed the wayward fair:
Full many a knight had been entangled there.
But still, whoever wooed her or embraced,
On every mind some mighty spell she cast;
Some she would teach (for she was wondrous wise,
And made her dupes see all things with her eyes)
That forms material, whatsoe'er we dream,
Are not at all, or are not what they seem,
That substances and modes of every kind
Are mere impressions on the passive mind;
And he that splits his cranium, breaks at most
A fancied head against a fancied post:
Others, that earth, ere sin had drowned it all,
Was smooth and even as an ivory ball;
That all the various beauties we survey,
Hills, valleys, rivers, and the boundless sea,
Are but departures from the first design,
Effects of punishment and wrath divine.

She tutored some in Dædalus' art,
And promised they should act his wild-goose part,
On waxen pinions soar without a fall,
Swift as the proudest gander of them all.
  But fate reserved Sir Airy to maintain
The wildest project of her teeming brain;
That wedlock is not rigorous as supposed,
But man, within a wider pale enclosed,
May rove at will, where appetite shall lead,
Free as the lordly bull that ranges o'er the mead;
That forms and rites are tricks of human law,
As idle as the chattering of a daw;
That lewd incontinence, and lawless rape,
Are marriage in its true and proper shape;
That man by faith and truth is made a slave,
The ring a bauble, and the priest a knave.[1]
  "Fair fall the deed!" the knight exulting cried.
"Now is the time to make the maid a bride!"
  'Twas on the noon of an autumnal day,
October hight, but mild and fair as May;
When scarlet fruits the russet hedge adorn,
And floating films envelope every thorn;
When gently as in June, the rivers glide,
And only missed the flowers that graced their side;
The linnet twittered out his parting song,
With many a chorister the woods among;
On southern banks the ruminating sheep
Lay snug and warm: — 'twas summer's farewell
peep.

[1] This is an accurate analysis of the doctrines of Madan.

Propitious to his fond intent there grew
An arbour near at hand of thickest yew,
With many a boxen bush, close clipt between,
And philyrea of a gilded green.
But what old Chaucer's merry page befits,
The chaster Muse of modern days omits.
Suffice it then in decent terms to say,
She saw, — and turned her rosy cheek away.
Small need of prayer-book or of priest, I ween,
When parties are agreed, retired the scene,
Occasion prompt, and appetite so keen.
Hypothesis (for with such magic power
Fancy endued her in her natal hour)
From many a streaming lake and reeking bog.
Bade rise in haste a dank and drizzling fog.
That curtained round the scene where they reposed,
And wood and lawn in dusky folds enclosed.
Fear seized the trembling sex ; in every grove
They wept the wrongs of honourable love.
In vain, they cried, are hymeneal rites,
Vain our delusive hope of constant knights ;
The marriage bond has lost its power to bind,
And flutters loose, the sport of every wind.
The bride, while yet her bride's attire is on,
Shall mourn her absent lord, for he is gone,
Satiate of her, and weary of the same,
To distant wilds in quest of other game.
Ye fair Circassians, all your lutes employ!
Seraglios sing, and harems dance for joy!
For British nymphs, whose lords were lately true,

Nymphs quite as fair, and happier once than you,
Honour, esteem, and confidence forgot,
Feel all the meanness of your slavish lot.
O curst Hypothesis! your hellish arts
Seduce our husbands, and estrange their hearts.
Will none arise? no knight who still retains
The blood of ancient worthies in his veins,
To assert the charter of the chaste and fair,
Find out her treacherous heart, and plant a dagger there?
A knight (can he that serves the fair do less?)
Starts at the call of beauty in distress;
And he that does not, whatsoe'er occurs,
Is recreant, and unworthy of his spurs.
Full many a champion, bent on hardy deed,
Called for his arms and for his princely steed.
So swarmed the Sabine youth, and grasped the shield,
When Roman rapine, by no laws withheld,
Lest Rome should end with her first founders' lives,
Made half their maids, *sans* ceremony, wives.
But not the mitred few, the soul their charge,
They left these bodily concerns at large;
Forms or no forms, pluralities or pairs,
Right reverend sirs! was no concern of theirs.
The rest, alert and active as became
A courteous knighthood, caught the generous flame:
One was accoutred when the cry began,

Knight of the Silver Moon, Sir Marmadan.
Oft as his patroness, who rules the night,
Hangs out her lamp in yon cerulean height,
His vow was, (and he well performed his vow,)
Armed at all points, with terror on his brow,
To judge the land, to purge atrocious crimes,
And quell the shapeless monsters of the times.
For cedars famed, fair Lebanon supplied
The well-poised lance that quivered at his side;
Truth armed it with a point so keen, so just,
No spell or charm was proof against the thrust.
He couched it firm upon his puissant thigh,
And darting through his helm an eagle's eye,
On all the wings of chivalry advanced
To where the fond Sir Airy lay entranced.
He dreamt not of a foe, or if his fear
Foretold one, dreamt not of a foe so near.
Far other dreams his feverish mind employed,
Of rights restored, variety enjoyed;
Of virtue too well fenced to fear a flaw;
Vice passing current by the stamp of law;
Large population on a liberal plan,
And woman trembling at the foot of man;
How simple wedlock fornication works,
And Christians marrying may convert the Turks.[1]
The trumpet now spoke Marmadan at hand,
A trumpet that was heard through all the land.

[1] It was one of Madan's crotchets, that, if polygamy were allowed in Christian countries, "the Mahometans and Chinese might be induced to embrace the truth as it is in Jesus."

His high-bred steed expands his nostrils wide,
And snorts aloud to cast the mist aside;
But he, the virtues of his lance to show,
Struck thrice the point upon his saddle-bow;
Three sparks ensued that chased it all away,
And set the unseemly pair in open day.
"To horse!" he cried, "or by this good right hand
And better spear, I smite you where you stand."
Sir Airy, not a whit dismayed or scared,
Buckled his helm, and to his steed repaired;
Whose bridle, while he cropped the grass below,
Hung not far off upon a myrtle-bough.
He mounts at once, —such confidence infused
The insidious witch that had his wits abused;
And she, regardless of her softer kind,
Seized fast the saddle and sprang up behind.
"O shame to knighthood!" his assailant cried;
'O shame!" ten thousand echoing nymphs replied.
Placed with advantage at his listening ear,
She whispered still that he had naught to fear;
That he was cased in such enchanted steel,
So polished and compact from head to heel,
"Come ten, come twenty, should an army call
Thee to the field, thou shouldst withstand them all."
"By Dian's beams," Sir Marmadan exclaimed,
"The guiltless still are ever least ashamed!
But guard thee well, expect no feigned attack;
And guard beside the sorceress at thy back!"
He spoke indignant, and his spurs applied,
Though little need, to his good palfrey's side:

The barb sprang forward, and his lord, whose force
Was equal to the swiftness of his horse,
Rushed with a whirlwind's fury on the foe,
And, Phineas like, transfixed them at a blow.
Then sang the married and the maiden throng,
Love graced the theme, and harmony the song;
The Fauns and Satyrs, a lascivious race,
Shrieked at the sight, and, conscious, fled the place;
And Hymen, trimming his dim torch anew,
His snowy mantle o'er his shoulders threw;
He turned, and viewed it oft on every side,
And reddening with a just and generous pride,
Blessed the glad beams of that propitious day,
The spot he loathed so much forever cleansed away.

ON THE HIGH PRICE OF FISH.

IN A LETTER TO MRS. NEWTON.

(1781.)

Cocoa-nut naught,
Fish too dear,
None must be bought
For us that are here:

No lobster on earth,
That ever I saw,
To me would be worth
Sixpence a claw.

So, dear Madam, wait
  Till fish can be got
At a reasonable rate,
  Whether lobster or not;

Till the French and the Dutch
  Have quitted the seas,
And then send as much
  And as oft as you please.

TO MRS. NEWTON.

A NOBLE theme demands a noble verse;
In such I thank you for your fine oysters.
The barrel was magnificently large,
But, being sent to Olney at free charge,
Was not inserted in the driver's list,
And therefore overlooked, forgot, or missed;
For, when the messenger whom we despatched
Inquired for oysters, Hob his noddle scratched;
Denying that his wagon or his wain
Did any such commodity contain.
In consequence of which, your welcome boon
Did not arrive till yesterday at noon;
In consequence of which some chanced to die,
And some, though very sweet, were very dry.
Now Madam says, (and what she says must still
Deserve attention, say she what she will,)
That what we call the diligence, be-case
It goes to London with a swifter pace,

Would better suit the carriage of your gift,
Returning downward with a pace as swift:
And therefore recommends it with this aim, —
To save at least three days, — the price the same.
For though it will not carry or convey
For less than twelve pence, send whate'er you may,
For oysters bred upon the salt sea-shore,
Packed in a barrel, they will charge no more.

News have I none that I can deign to write,
Save that it rained prodigiously last night;
And that ourselves were, at the seventh hour,
Caught in the first beginning of the shower;
But walking, running, and with much ado,
Got home — just time enough to be wet through;
Yet both are well, and, wondrous to be told,
Soused as we were, we yet have caught no cold;
And wishing just the same good hap to you,
We say good Madam, and good Sir, adieu!

VERSES PRINTED BY HIMSELF ON A FLOOD AT OLNEY.

To watch the storms, and hear the sky
Give all our almanacs the lie;
To shake with cold, and see the plains
In autumn drowned with wintry rains:
'Tis thus I spend my moments here,
And wish myself a Dutch mynheer;

I then should have no need of wit,
For lumpish Hollander unfit!
Nor should I then repine at mud,
Or meadows deluged with a flood;
But in a bog live well content,
And find it just my element;
Should be a clog, and not a man;
Nor wish in vain for sister Ann,
With charitable aid to drag
My mind out of its proper quag;
Should have the genius of a boor,
And no ambition to have more.

THE DISTRESSED TRAVELLERS;

OR, LABOUR IN VAIN.

A NEW SONG TO A TUNE NEVER SUNG BEFORE

I.

I SING of a journey to Clifton
We would have performed if we could,
Without cart or barrow to lift on
Poor Mary and me through the mud.
Slee sla slud,
Stuck in the mud,
Oh it is pretty to wade through a flood!

II.

So away we went slipping and sliding,
Hop, hop. *à la mode de deux* frogs,

'Tis near as good walking as riding,
When ladies are dressed in their clogs.
Wheels, no doubt,
Go briskly about,
But they clatter and rattle, and make such a rout!

III.

SHE.

"Well! now I protest it is charming,
How finely the weather improves!
That cloud, though 'tis rather alarming,
How slowly and stately it moves!"

HE.

"Pshaw! never mind,
'Tis not in the wind,
We are travelling south, and shall leave it behind."

IV.

SHE.

"I am glad we are come for an airing,
For folks may be pounded and penned,
Until they grow rusty, not caring
To stir half a mile to an end."

HE.

"The longer we stay,
The longer we may;
It's a folly to think about weather or way."

V.

SHE.

"But now I begin to be frighted;
If I fall, what a way I should roll!

I am glad that the bridge was indicted, —
Stay! stop! I am sunk in a hole!"

HE.

"Nay, never care!
'Tis a common affair;
You'll not be the last that will set a foot there."

VI.

SHE.

"Let me breathe now a little, and ponder
On what it were better to do;
That terrible lane, I see yonder,
I think we shall never get through."

HE.

"So think I: —
But, by the bye,
We never shall know, if we never should try."

VII.

SHE.

"But should we get there, how shall we get home?
What a terrible deal of bad road we have past!
Slipping and sliding; and if we should come
To a difficult stile, I am ruined at last!
O this lane!
Now it is plain
That struggling and striving is labour in vain."

VIII.

HE.

"Stick fast there, while I go and look."

SHE.

"Don't go away, for fear I should fall!"

HE.

"I have examined it every nook,
And what you see here is a sample of all.
Come, wheel round,
The dirt we have found
Would be an estate at a farthing a pound."

IX.

Now, sister Anne, the guitar you must take,
Set it, and sing it, and make it a song;
I have varied the verse for variety's sake,
And cut it off short, — because it was long.
'Tis hobbling and lame,
Which critics wont blame,
For the sense and the sound, they say, should be the same.

SWEET MEAT HAS SOUR SAUCE;

OR, THE SLAVE-TRADE IN THE DUMPS.

A TRADER I am to the African shore,
But since that my trading is like to be o'er,
I'll sing you a song that you ne'er heard before,
Which nobody can deny, deny,
Which nobody can deny.

When I first heard the news it gave me a shock,
Much like what they call an electrical knock,
And now I am going to sell off my stock,
Which nobody, &c.

'Tis a curious assortment of dainty regales,
To tickle the negroes with when the ship sails,
Fine chains for the neck, and a cat with nine tails,
Which nobody, &c.

Here's supple-jack plenty, and store of rat-tan,
That will wind itself round the sides of a man,
As close as a hoop round a bucket or can,
Which nobody, &c.

Here's padlocks and bolts, and screws for the thumbs,
That squeeze them so lovingly, till the blood comes;
They sweeten the temper like comfits or plums,
Which nobody, &c.

When a negro his head from his victuals withdraws,
And clenches his teeth and thrusts out his paws,
Here's a notable engine to open his jaws,
Which nobody, &c.

Thus going to market, we kindly prepare
A pretty black cargo of African ware,
For what they must meet with when they get there,
Which nobody, &c.

'Twould do your heart good to see 'em below
Lie flat on their backs all the way as we go,
Like sprats on a gridiron, scores in a row,
Which nobody, &c

But ah! if in vain I have studied an art
So gainful to me, all boasting apart,
I think it will break my compassionate heart,
Which nobody, &c.

For oh! how it enters my soul like an awl!
This pity, which some people self-pity call,
Is sure the most heart-piercing pity of all,
Which nobody, &c.

So this is my song, as I told you before;
Come, buy off my stock, for I must no more
Carry Cæsars and Pompeys to sugar-cane shore,
Which nobody, &c.

MOTTO FOR A CLOCK.[1]

QUAE lenta accedit, quam velox præterit hora!
Ut capias, patiens esto, sed esto vigil!

Slow comes the hour; its passing speed how great!
Waiting to seize it, — vigilantly wait!

[1] Written for the king's clock, at the request of Mr. Bacon, who designed the embellishments. The translation is by Hayley.

ON THE RECEIPT OF A HAMPER.[1]

IN THE MANNER OF HOMER.

The straw-stuffed hamper with his ruthless steel
He opened, cutting sheer the inserted cords,
Which bound the lid and lip secure. Forth came
The rustling package first, bright straw of wheat,
Or oats, or barley; next a bottle green
Throat-full, clear spirits the contents, distilled
Drop after drop odorous, by the art
Of the fair mother of his friend, — the Rose.

ON THE NEGLECT OF HOMER.

Could Homer come himself, distressed and poor,
And tune his harp at Rhedicina's door,
The rich old vixen would exclaim, (I fear,)
"Begone! no tramper gets a farthing here"

INSCRIPTION FOR A MOSS-HOUSE IN THE SHRUBBERY AT WESTON.

Here, free from riot's hated noise,
Be mine the calmer, purer joys
A book or friend bestows;
Far from the storms that shake the great,
Contentment's gale shall fan my seat,
And sweeten my repose.

[1] From a letter to Mr. Rose.

ON THE BENEFIT RECEIVED BY HIS MAJESTY FROM SEA-BATHING IN THE YEAR 1789.

O SOVEREIGN of an isle renown'd
For undisputed sway,
Wherever o'er yon gulf profound
Her navies wing their way,

With juster claim she builds at length
Her empire on the sea,
And well may boast the waves her strength
Which strength restored to thee.

ADDRESSED TO MISS MACARTNEY ON READING THE PRAYER FOR INDIFFERENCE.[1]

AND dwells there in a female heart,
By bounteous heaven design'd,
The choicest raptures to impart,
To feel the most refined—

Dwells there a wish in such a breast
Its nature to forego,
To smother in ignoble rest
At once both bliss and woe!

[1] For the Ode referred to, see Annual Register, vol. v p. 202.

Far be the thought, and far the strain,
Which breathes the low desire,
How sweet soe'er the verse complain,
Though Phœbus string the lyre.

Come, then, fair maid (in nature wise)
Who, knowing them, can tell
From generous sympathy what joys
The glowing bosom swell:

In justice to the various powers
Of pleasing, which you share,
Join me, amid your silent hours,
To form the better prayer.

With lenient balm may Oberon hence
To fairy land be driven,
With every herb that blunts the sense
Mankind received from heaven.

"Oh! if my Sovereign Author please,
Far be it from my fate
To live, unbless'd, in torpid ease,
And slumber on in state.

"Each tender tie of life defied
Whence social pleasures spring,
Unmoved with all the world beside,
A solitary thing!—"

Some Alpine mountain, wrapt in snow,
Thus braves the whirling blast,
Eternal winter doom'd to know,
No genial spring to taste.

In vain warm suns their influence shed,
The zephyrs sport in vain,
He rears unchanged his barren head,
Whilst beauty decks the plain.

What though in scaly armour dress'd,
Indifference may repel
The shafts of woe—in such a breast
No joy can ever dwell.

'Tis woven in the world's great plan,
And fix'd by Heaven's decree,
That all the true delights of man
Should spring from Sympathy.

'Tis nature bids, and whilst the laws
Of nature we retain,
Our self-approving bosom draws
A pleasure from its pain.

Thus grief itself has comforts dear
The sordid never know;
And ecstasy attends the tear
When virtue bids it flow.

For when it streams from that pure source
No bribes the heart can win,
To check, or alter from its course,
The luxury within.

Peace to the phlegm of sullen elves,
Who, if from labour eased,
Extend no care beyond themselves,
Unpleasing and unpleased.

Let no low thought suggest the prayer,
Oh! grant, kind Heaven, to me,
Long as I draw ethereal air,
Sweet Sensibility.

Where'er the heavenly nymph is seen,
With lustre-beaming eye,
A train, attendant on their queen,
(Her rosy chorus) fly.

The jocund Loves in Hymen's band,
With torches ever bright,
And generous Friendship hand in hand,
With Pity's watery sight.

The gentler Virtues too are join'd
In youth immortal warm;
The soft relations, which, combined,
Give life her every charm.

The Arts come smiling in the close,
And lend celestial fire;
The marble breathes, the canvas glows,
The Muses sweep the lyre.

"Still may my melting bosom cleave
To sufferings not my own,
And still the sigh responsive heave
Where'er is heard a groan.

"So Pity shall take Virtue's part,
Her natural ally,
And fashioning my soften'd heart,
Prepare it for the sky."

This artless vow may Heaven receive,
And you, fond maid, approve:
So may your guiding angel give
Whate'er you wish or love.

So may the rosy-finger'd hours
Lead on the various year,
And every joy, which now is yours,
Extend a larger sphere.

And suns to come, as round they wheel,
Your golden moments bless
With all a tender heart can feel,
Or lively fancy guess.

1762.

FROM A LETTER TO THE REV. MR. NEWTON,

LATE RECTOR OF ST. MARY WOOLNOTH.

Says the Pipe to the Snuffbox, I can't understand
What the ladies and gentlemen see in your face,
That you are in fashion all over the land,
And I am so much fallen into disgrace.

Do but see what a pretty contemplative air
I give to the company—pray do but note 'em—
You would think that the wise men of Greece were all there,
Or at least would suppose them the wise men of Gotham.

My breath is as sweet as the breath of blown roses,
While you are a nuisance where'er you appear;
There is nothing but snivelling and blowing of noses,
Such a noise as turns any man's stomach to hear.

Then lifting his lid in a delicate way, [ing,
And opening his mouth with a smile quite engag-
The Box in reply was heard plainly to say,
What a silly dispute is this we are waging!

If you have a little of merit to claim, [weed,
You may thank the sweet-smelling Virginian
And I, if I seem to deserve any blame,
The beforemention'd drug in apology plead.

Thus neither the praise nor the blame is our own
No room for a sneer, much less a cachinnus,
We are vehicles, not of tobacco alone, [in us.
But of any thing else they may choose to put

1782.

THE FLATTING MILL.

AN ILLUSTRATION.

When a bar of pure silver or ingot of gold
Is sent to be flatted or wrought into length,
It is pass'd between cylinders often, and roll'd
In an engine of utmost mechanical strength.

Thus tortured and squeezed, at last it appears
Like a loose heap of ribbon, a glittering show,
Like music it tinkles and rings in your ears,
And, warm'd by the pressure, is all in a glow.

This process achieved, it is doom'd to sustain
The thump after thump of a gold-beater's mallet,
And at last is of service in sickness or pain
To cover a pill for a delicate palate.

Alas for the poet! who dares undertake
To urge reformation of national ill—
His head and his heart are both likely to ache
With the double employment of mallet and mill.

If he wish to instruct, he must learn to delight,
Smooth, ductile, and even his fancy must flow,
Must tinkle and glitter like gold to the sight,
And catch in its progress a sensible glow.

After all he must beat it as thin and as fine
As the leaf that enfolds what an invalid swallows;
For truth is unwelcome, however divine,
And unless you adorn it, a nausea follows.

EPITAPH ON A FREE BUT TAME REDBREAST,

A FAVOURITE OF MISS SALLY HURDIS.

These are not dewdrops, these are tears,
And tears by Sally shed,
For absent Robin, who she fears,
With too much cause, is dead.

One morn he came not to her hand
As he was wont to come,
And, on her finger perch'd, to stand
Picking his breakfast-crumb.

Alarm'd, she call'd him, and perplex'd
She sought him, but in vain—
That day he came not, nor the next,
Nor ever came again.

She therefore raised him here a tomb,
Though where he fell, or how,
None knows, so secret was his doom,
Nor where he moulders now.

Had half a score of coxcombs died
In social Robin's stead,
Poor Sally's tears had soon been dried,
Or haply never shed.

But Bob was neither rudely bold
Nor spiritlessly tame;
Nor was, like theirs, his bosom cold,
But always in a flame.

March, 1792.

SONNET

ADDRESSED TO WILLIAM HAYLEY, ESQ.

HAYLEY—thy tenderness fraternal shown
In our first interview, delightful guest!
To Mary, and me for her dear sake distress'd,
Such as it is has made my heart thy own,
Though heedless now of new engagements grown;
For threescore winters make a wintry breast.
And I had purposed ne'er to go in quest

Of friendship more, except with God alone.
But thou hast won me; nor is God my foe,
Who, ere this last afflictive scene began,
Sent thee to mitigate the dreadful blow,
My brother, by whose sympathy I know
Thy true deserts infallibly to scan,
Not more to admire the bard than love the man.

June 2, 1792.

AN EPITAPH.

HERE lies one who never drew
Blood himself, yet many slew;
Gave the gun its aim, and figure
Made in field, yet ne'er pull'd trigger.
Armed men have gladly made
Him their guide, and him obey'd;
At his signified desire
Would advance, present, and fire—
Stout he was, and large of limb,
Scores have fled at sight of him!
And to all this fame he rose
Only following his nose.
Neptune was he call'd, not he
Who controls the boisterous sea,
But of happier command,
Neptune of the furrow'd land;
And, your wonder vain to shorten,
Pointer to Sir John Throckmorton.

1792.

ON RECEIVING HAYLEY'S PICTURE.

In language warm as could be breathed or penn'd
Thy picture speaks the original, my friend,
Not by those looks that indicate thy mind—
They only speak thee friend of all mankind;
Expression here more soothing still I see,
That friend of all a partial friend to me.

January, 1793.

ON A PLANT OF VIRGIN'S BOWER,

DESIGNED TO COVER A GARDEN-SEAT.

Thrive, gentle plant! and weave a bower
For Mary and for me,
And deck with many a splendid flower
Thy foliage large and free.

Thou camest from Eartham, and wilt shade
(If truly I divine),
Some future day the illustrious head
Of him who made thee mine.

Should Daphne show a jealous frown,
And Envy seize the bay,
Affirming none so fit to crown
Such honour'd brows as they,

Thy cause with zeal we shall defend,
And with convincing power;
For why should not the virgin's friend
Be crown'd with virgin's bower?

Spring of 1793.

ON RECEIVING HEYNE'S VIRGIL FROM MR. HAYLEY.

I SHOULD have deem'd it once an effort vain
To sweeten more sweet Maro's matchless strain,
But from that error now behold me free
Since I received him as a gift from thee.

Oct. 1793.

EPITAPH ON MRS. M. HIGGINS, OF WESTON.

Laurels may flourish round the conqueror's
tomb,
But happiest they who win the world to come:
Believers have a silent field to fight,
And their exploits are veil'd from human sight.
They in some nook, where little known they dwell,
Kneel, pray in faith, and rout the hosts of hell;
Eternal triumphs crown their toils divine,
And all those triumphs, Mary, now are thine.

1791.

A RIDDLE.

I am just two and two, I am warm, I am cold,
And the parent of numbers that cannot be told.
I am lawful, unlawful—a duty, a fault,
I am often sold dear, good for nothing when bought;
An extraordinary boon, and a matter of course,
And yielded with pleasure when taken by force.

ANSWER.

FROM THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE, VOL. LXXVI. p. 1224.

A riddle by Cowper
Made me swear like a trooper;
But my anger, alas! was in vain;
For, remembering the bliss
Of beauty's soft Kiss,
I now long for such riddles again. J. T.

ON A MISTAKE IN THE TRANSLATION OF HOMER

Cowper had sinn'd with some excuse,
If, bound in rhyming tethers,
He had committed this abuse
Of changing ewes for wethers;[1]

But, male for female is a trope,
Or rather bold misnomer,
That would have startled even Pope,
When he translated Homer.

IN SEDITIONEM HORRENDAM,

CORRUPTELIS GALLICIS, UT FERTUR, LONDINI NUPER EXORTAM.

Perfida, crudelis, victa et lymphata furore,
Non armis, laurum Gallia fraude petit:
Venalem pretio plebem conducit, et urit
Undique privatas patriciasque domos.
Nequicquàm conata suâ, fœdissima sperat
Posse tamen nostrâ nos superare manu.
Gallia, vana struis! Precibus nunc utere! Vinces,
Nam mites timidis supplicibusque sumus.

[1] I have heard about my wether mutton from various quarters. It was a blunder hardly pardonable in a man who has lived amid fields and meadows, grazed by sheep, almost these thirty years. I have accordingly satirized myself in two stanzas which I composed last night, while I lay awake, tormented with pain, and well dosed with laudanum. If you find them not very brilliant, therefore, you will know how to account for it.—*Letter to Joseph Hill, Esq. dated April* 15, 1792.

TRANSLATION.

False, cruel, disappointed, stung to the heart,
France quits the warrior's for the assassin's part,
To dirty hands a dirty bribe conveys,
Bids the low street and lofty palace blaze.
Her sons, too weak to vanquish us alone,
She hires the worst and basest of our own.
Kneel, France! a suppliant conquers us with ease,
We always spare a coward on his knees.

TRANSLATIONS OF GREEK VERSES.

FROM THE GREEK OF JULIANUS.

A Spartan, his companion slain,
Alone from battle fled;
His mother, kindling with disdain
That she had borne him, struck him dead;
For courage, and not birth alone,
In Sparta, testifies a son!

ON THE SAME BY PALAADAS.

A Spartan 'scaping from the fight,
His mother met him in his flight,
Upheld a falchion to his breast,
And thus the fugitive address'd:

"Thou canst but live to blot with shame
Indelible thy mother's name,
While every breath that thou shalt draw
Offends against thy country's law;
But, if thou perish by this hand,
Myself indeed throughout the land,
To my dishonour, shall be known
The mother still of such a son;
But Sparta will be safe and free,
And that shall serve to comfort me."

AN EPITAPH.

My name—my country—what are they to thee?
What, whether base or proud my pedigree?
Perhaps I far surpass'd all other men—
Perhaps I fell below them all—what then?
Suffice it, stranger! that thou seest a tomb—
Thou know'st its use—it hides—no matter whom.

ANOTHER.

Take to thy bosom, gentle earth, a swain
With much hard labour in thy service worn!
He set the vines that clothe yon ample plain,
And he these olives that the vale adorn.
He fill'd with grain the glebe; the rills he led
Through this green herbage, and those fruitful bowers;
Thou, therefore earth! lie lightly on his head,
His hoary head, and deck his grave with flowers.

ANOTHER.

PAINTER, this likeness is too strong,
And we shall mourn the dead too long.

ANOTHER.

AT threescore winters' end I died
A cheerless being, sole and sad:
The nuptial knot I never tied,
And wish my father never had.

BY CALLIMACHUS.

AT morn we placed on his funereal bier
Young Melanippus; and at eventide,
Unable to sustain a loss so dear,
By her own hand his blooming sister died.
Thus Aristippus mourn'd his noble race,
Annihilated by a double blow,
Nor son could hope, nor daughter more to embrace,
And all Cyrene sadden'd at his woe.

ON MILTIADES.

MILTIADES! thy valour best
(Although in every region known)
The men of Persia can attest,
Taught by thyself at Marathon.

ON AN INFANT.

Bewail not much, my parents! me, the prey
Of ruthless Ades, and sepulchred here.
An infant, in my fifth scarce finish'd year,
He found all sportive, innocent, and gay,
Your young Callimachus; and if I knew
Not many joys, my griefs were also few.

BY HERACLIDES.

In Cnidus born, the consort I became
Of Euphron. Aretimias was my name.
His bed I shared, nor proved a barren bride,
But bore two children at a birth, and died.
One child I leave to solace and uphold
Euphron hereafter, when infirm and old.
And one, for his remembrance sake, I bear
To Pluto's realm, till he shall join me there.

ON THE REED.

I was of late a barren plant,
Useless, insignificant,
Nor fig, nor grape, nor apple bore,
A native of the marshy shore;
But gather'd for poetic use,
And plunged into a sable juice,
Of which my modicum I sip
With narrow mouth and slender lip,

At once, although by nature dumb,
All eloquent I have become,
And speak with fluency untired,
As if by Phœbus' self inspired.

TO HEALTH.

Eldest born of powers divine!
Bless'd Hygeia! be it mine
To enjoy what thou canst give,
And henceforth with thee to live:
For in power if pleasure be,
Wealth, or numerous progeny,
Or in amorous embrace,
Where no spy infests the place;
Or in aught that heaven bestows
To alleviate human woes,
When the wearied heart despairs
Of a respite from its cares;
These and every true delight
Flourish only in thy sight;
And the sister Graces three
Owe, themselves, their youth to thee,
Without whom we may possess
Much, but never happiness.

ON INVALIDS.

Far happier are the dead, methinks, than they
Who look for death, and fear it every day.

ON THE ASTROLOGERS.

The astrologers did all alike presage
My uncle's dying in extreme old age;
One only disagreed. But he was wise,
And spoke not till he heard the funeral cries.

ON AN OLD WOMAN.

Mycilla dyes her locks, 'tis said;
But 'tis a foul aspersion;
She buys them black; they therefore need
No subsequent immersion.

ON FLATTERERS.

No mischief worthier of our fear
In nature can be found
Than friendship, in ostent sincere,
But hollow and unsound.
For lull'd into a dangerous dream
We close infold a foe,
Who strikes, when most secure we seem,
The inevitable blow.

ON A TRUE FRIEND.

Hast thou a friend? Thou hast indeed
A rich and large supply,
Treasure to serve your every need,
Well managed, till you die.

ON THE SWALLOW.

Attic maid! with honey fed,
Bear'st thou to thy callow brood
Yonder locust from the mead,
Destined their delicious food?

Ye have kindred voices clear,
Ye alike unfold the wing,
Migrate hither, sojourn here,
Both attendant on the spring!

Ah, for pity drop the prize;
Let it not with truth be said,
That a songster gasps and dies,
That a songster may be fed.

ON LATE ACQUIRED WEALTH.

Poor in my youth, and in life's later scenes
Rich to no end, I curse my natal hour,
Who nought enjoy'd while young, denied the means;
And nought when old enjoy'd, denied the power

ON A BATH, BY PLATO.

Did Cytherea to the skies
From this pellucid lymph arise?
Or was it Cytherea's touch,
When bathing here, that made it such?

ON A FOWLER, BY ISIODORUS.

With seeds and birdlime, from the desert air,
Eumelus gather'd free, though scanty, fare,
No lordly patron's hand he deign'd to kiss,
Nor luxury knew, save liberty, nor bliss.
Thrice thirty years he lived, and to his heirs
His seeds bequeath'd, his birdlime, and his snares.

ON NIOBE.

Charon! receive a family on board,
Itself sufficient for thy crazy yawl,
Apollo and Diana, for a word
By me too proudly spoken, slew us all.

ON A GOOD MAN.

Traveller, regret not me; for thou shalt find
Just cause of sorrow none in my decease,
Who, dying, children's children left behind,
And with one wife lived many a year in peace:
Three virtuous youths espoused my daughters
And oft their infants in my bosom lay, [three.
Nor saw I one, of all derived from me,
Touch'd with disease, or torn by death away.
Their duteous hands my funeral rites bestow'd,
And me, by blameless manners fitted well
To seek it, sent to the serene abode
Where shades of pious men for ever dwell.

ON A MISER.

They call thee rich—I deem thee poor,
Since, if thou darest not use thy store,
But savest it only for thine heirs,
The treasure is not thine, but theirs.

ANOTHER.

A miser, traversing his house,
Espied, unusual there, a mouse,
And thus his uninvited guest
Briskly inquisitive address'd:
"Tell me, my dear, to what cause is it
I owe this unexpected visit?"
The mouse her host obliquely eyed,
And, smiling, pleasantly replied:
"Fear not, good fellow, for your hoard!
I come to lodge, and not to board."

ANOTHER.

Art thou some individual of a kind
Long lived by nature as the rook or hind?
Heap treasure, then, for if thy need be such,
Thou hast excuse, and scarce canst heap too much. [breast
But man thou seem'st, clear therefore from thy
This lust of treasure—folly at the best!
For why shouldst thou go wasted to the tomb,
To fatten with thy spoils thou know'st not whom?

ON FEMALE INCONSTANCY.

Rich, thou hadst many lovers—poor, hast none,
So surely want extinguishes the flame,
And she who call'd thee once her pretty one,
And her Adonis, now inquires thy name.

Where wast thou born, Sosicrates, and where
In what strange country can thy parents live,
Who seem'st, by thy complaints, not yet aware
That want's a crime no woman can forgive?

ON THE GRASSHOPPER.

Happy songster, perch'd above,
On the summit of the grove,
Whom a dewdrop cheers to sing
With the freedom of a king.
From thy perch survey the fields
Where prolific nature yields
Nought that, willingly as she,
Man surrenders not to thee.
For hostility or hate
None thy pleasures can create.
Thee it satisfies to sing
Sweetly the return of spring,
Herald of the genial hours,
Harming neither herbs nor flowers.

Therefore man thy voice attends
Gladly—thou and he are friends;
Nor thy never ceasing strains
Phœbus or the Muse disdains
As too simple or too long,
For themselves inspire the song.
Earth-born, bloodless, undecaying,
Ever singing, sporting, playing,
What has nature else to show
Godlike in its kind as thou?

ON HERMOCRATIA.

Hermocratia named—save only one—
Twice fifteen births I bore, and buried none;
For neither Phœbus pierced my thriving joys,
Nor Dian—she my girls, or he my boys.
But Dian rather, when my daughters lay
In parturition, chased their pangs away.
And all my sons, by Phœbus' bounty, shared
A vigorous youth, by sickness unimpair'd.
O Niobe! far less prolific! see
Thy boast against Latona shamed by me!

FROM MENANDER.

Fond youth! who dream'st that hoarded gold
Is needful, not alone to pay
For all thy various items sold,
To serve the wants of every day;

Bread, vinegar, and oil, and meat,
For savoury viands season'd high;
But somewhat more important yet—
I tell thee what it cannot buy.

No treasure, hadst thou more amass'd
Than fame to Tantalus assign'd,
Would save thee from a tomb at last,
But thou must leave it all behind.

I give thee, therefore, counsel wise;
Confide not vainly in thy store,
However large—much less despise
Others comparatively poor;

But in thy more exalted state
A just and equal temper show,
That all who see thee rich and great
May deem thee worthy to be so.

ON PALLAS BATHING, FROM A HYMN OF CALLIMACHUS.

Nor oils of balmy scent produce,
Nor mirror for Minerva's use,
Ye nymphs who lave her; she, array'd
In genuine beauty, scorns their aid.
Not even when they left the skies
To seek on Ida's head the prize

From Paris' hand, did Juno deign,
Or Pallas in the crystal plain
Of Simois' stream her locks to trace,
Or in the mirror's polish'd face,
Though Venus oft with anxious care
Adjusted twice a single hair.

TO DEMOSTHENES.

It flatters and deceives thy view,
This mirror of ill-polish'd ore;
For were it just, and told thee true,
Thou wouldst consult it never more.

ON A SIMILAR CHARACTER.

You give your cheeks a rosy stain,
With washes dye your hair;
But paint and washes both are vain
To give a youthful air.

Those wrinkles mock your daily toil,
No labour will efface 'em,
You wear a mask of smoothest oil,
Yet still with ease we trace 'em.

An art so fruitless then forsake,
Which though you much excel in,
You never can contrive to make
Old Hecuba young Helen.

ON AN UGLY FELLOW.

Beware, my friend! of crystal brook,
Or fountain, lest that hideous hook,
Thy nose, thou chance to see;
Narcissus' fate would then be thine,
And self-detested thou wouldst pine,
As self-enamour'd he.

ON A BATTERED BEAUTY.

Hair, wax, rouge, honey, teeth you buy,
A multifarious store!
A mask at once would all supply,
Nor would it cost you more.

ON A THIEF.

When Aulus, the nocturnal thief, made prize
Of Hermes, swift-wing'd envoy of the skies,
Hermes, Arcadia's king, the thief divine,
Who, when an infant stole Apollo's kine,
And whom, as arbiter and overseer
Of our gymnastic sports, we planted here;
"Hermes," he cried, "you meet no new disaster;
Ofttimes the pupil goes beyond his master."

ON PEDIGREE.

FROM EPICHARMUS.

My mother! if thou love me, name no more
My noble birth! Sounding at every breath
My noble birth, thou kill'st me. Thither fly,
As to their only refuge, all from whom
Nature withholds all good besides; they boast
Their noble birth, conduct us to the tombs
Of their forefathers, and, from age to age
Ascending, trumpet their illustrious race:
But whom hast thou beheld, or canst thou name
Derived from no forefathers? Such a man
Lives not; for how could such be born at all?
And if it chance that, native of a land
Far distant, or in infancy deprived
Of all his kindred, one, who cannot trace
His origin, exist, why deem him sprung
From baser ancestry than theirs who can?
My mother! he whom nature at his birth
Endow'd with virtuous qualities, although
An Æthiop and a slave, is nobly born.

ON ENVY.

Pity, says the Theban bard,
From my wishes I discard;
Envy, let me rather be,
Rather far, a theme for thee!

Pity to distress is shown,
Envy to the great alone—
So the Theban—But to shine
Less conspicuous be mine!
I prefer the golden mean,
Pomp and penury between;
For alarm and peril wait
Ever on the loftiest state,
And the lowest to the end
Obloquy and scorn attend.

BY MOSCHUS.

I SLEPT when Venus enter'd: to my bed
A Cupid in her beauteous hand she led,
A bashful seeming boy, and thus she said:
"Shepherd, receive my little one! I bring
An untaught love, whom thou must teach to sing."
She said, and left him. I, suspecting nought,
Many a sweet strain my subtle pupil taught,
How reed to reed Pan first with osier bound,
How Pallas form'd the pipe of softest sound,
How Hermes gave the lute, and how the quire
Of Phœbus owe to Phœbus' self the lyre.
Such were my themes; my themes nought heeded
But ditties sang of amorous sort to me, [he,
The pangs that mortals and immortals prove
From Venus' influence, and the darts of love.
Thus was the teacher by the pupil taught;
His lessons I retain'd, and mine forgot.

BY PHILEMON.

Oft we enhance our ills by discontent,
And give them bulk beyond what nature meant,
A parent, brother, friend deceased, to cry—
"He's dead indeed, but he was born to die"—
Such temperate grief is suited to the size
And burthen of the loss; is just and wise.
But to exclaim, "Ah! wherefore was I born,
Thus to be left for ever thus forlorn?"
Who thus laments his loss invites distress,
And magnifies a woe that might be less,
Through dull despondence to his lot resign'd,
And leaving reason's remedy behind.

EPIGRAMS TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN OF OWEN.

ON ONE IGNORANT AND ARROGANT.

Thou mayst of double ignorance boast,
Who know'st not that thou nothing know'st.

PRUDENT SIMPLICITY.

That thou mayst injure no man, dovelike be,
And serpentlike, that none may injure thee!

TO A FRIEND IN DISTRESS.

I WISH thy lot, now bad, still worse, my friend;
For when at worst, they say, things always mend.

WHEN little more than boy in age,
I deem'd myself almost a sage:
But now seem worthier to be styled,
For ignorance, almost a child.

RETALIATION.

THE works of ancient bards divine,
Aulus, thou scorn'st to read;
And should posterity read thine,
It would be strange indeed!

SUNSET AND SUNRISE.

CONTEMPLATE, when the sun declines,
Thy death with deep reflection!
And when again he rising shines,
Thy day of resurrection!

TRANSLATIONS FROM THE FABLES OF GAY.

LEPUS MULTIS AMICUS.

LUSUS amicitia est, uni nisi dedita, ceu fit,
Simplice ni nexus fœdere, lusus amor.
Incerto genitore puer, non sæpe paternæ

Tutamen novit, deliciasque domûs:
Quique sibi fidos fore multos sperat, amicus
Mirum est huic misero si ferat ullus opem.
Comis erat, mitisque, et nolle et velle paratus
Cum quovis, Gaii more modoque, Lepus.
Ille, quot in sylvis et quot spatiantur in agris
Quadrupedes, nôrat conciliare sibi;
Et quisque innocuo, invitoque lacessere quenquam
Labra tenus saltem fidus amicus erat.
Ortum sub lucis dum pressa cubilia linquit,
Rorantes herbas, pabula sueta, petens,
Venatorum audit clangores ponè sequentem,
Fulmineumque sonum territus erro fugit.
Corda pavor pulsat, sursum sedet, erigit aures,
Respicit, et sentit jam prope adesse necem.
Utque canes fallat, latè circumvagus, illuc,
Unde abiit, mirâ calliditate redit;
Viribus at fractis tandem se projicit ultro
In mediâ miserum semianimemque viâ.
Vix ibi stratus, equi sonitum pedis audit, et, oh spe
Quam lætâ adventu cor agitatur equi!
Dorsum (inquit) mihi, chare, tuum concede, tuoque
Auxilio nares fallere, vimque canum.
Me meus, ut nosti, pes prodit—fidus amicus
Fert quodcunque lubens, nec grave sentit, onus.
Belle miselle lepuscule, (equus respondet.) amara
Omnia quæ tibi sunt, sunt et amara mihi.
Verum age—sume animos—multi, me pone, bo-
Adveniunt, quorum sis citò salvus ope. [nique
Proximus armenti dominus bos solicitatus
Auxilium his verbis se dare posse negat.

Quando quadrupedum, quot vivunt, nullus ami-
Me nescire potest usque fuisse tibi, [cum
Libertate æquus, quam cedit amicus amico,
Utar, et absque metu ne tibi displiceam; [vum
Hinc me mandat amor. Juxta istum messis acer-
Me mea, præ cunctis chara, juvenca manet;
Et quis non ultro quæcunque negotia linquit,
Pareat ut dominæ, cum vocat ipse suæ?
Neu me crudelem dicas—discedo—sed hircus,
Cujus ope effugias integer, hircus adest.
Febrem (ait hircus) habes. Heu, sicca ut lumina
Utque caput, collo deficiente, jacet! [languent!
Hirsutum mihi tergum; et forsan læserit ægrum,
Vellere eris melius fultus, ovisque venit.
Me mihi fecit onus natura, ovis inquit, anhelans
Sustineo lanæ pondera tanta meæ;
Me nec velocem nec fortem jacto, solentque
Nos etiam sævi dilacerare canes.
Ultimus accedit vitulus, vitulumque precatur,
Ut periturum alias ocius eripiat.
Remne ego, respondet vitulus, suscepero tantam,
Non depulsus adhuc ubere, natus heri?
Te, quem maturi canibus validique relinquunt,
Incolumem potero reddere parvus ego?
Præterea tollens quem illi aversantur, amicis
Forte parum videar consuluisse meis.
Ignoscas oro. Fidissima dissociantur
Corda, et tale tibi sat liquet esse meum.
Ecce autem ad calces canis est! te quanta per-
Tristitia est nobis ingruitura!—Vale! [empto

AVARUS ET PLUTUS.

Icta fenestra Euri flatu stridebat, avarus
Ex somno trepidus surgit, opumque memor.
Lata silenter humi ponit vestigia, quemque
Respicit ad sonitum respiciensque tremit;
Angustissima quæque foramina lampade visit,
Ad vectes, obices, fertque refertque manum.
Dein reserat crebris junctam compagibus arcam
Exultansque omnes conspicit intus opes.
Sed tandem furiis ultricibus actus ob artes
Queis sua res tenuis creverat in cumulum.
Contortis manibus nunc stat, nunc pectora pulsans
Aurum execratur, perniciemque vocat;
O mihi, ait, misero mens quam tranquilla fuisset,
Hoc celasset adhuc si modo terra malum!
Nunc autem virtus ipsa est venalis; et aurum
Quid contra vitii tormina sæva valet?
O inimicum aurum! O homini infestissima pestis;
Cui datur illecebras vincere posse tuas?
Aurum homines suasit contemnere quicquid honestum est,
Et præter nomen nil retinere boni.
Aurum cuncta mali per terras semina sparsit;
Aurum nocturnis furibus arma dedit.
Bella docet fortes, timidosque ad pessima ducit,
Fœdifragas artes, multiplicesque dolos,
Nec vitii quicquam est, quod non inveneris ortum
Ex malesuadâ auri sacrilegâque fame.
Dixit, et ingemuit; Plutusque suum sibi numen
Ante oculos, irâ fervidus, ipse stetit:

Arcam clausit avarus, et ora horrentia rugis
Ostendens, tremulum sic Deus increpuit.
Questibus his raucis mihi cur, stulte, obstrepis
Ista tui similis tristia quisque canit. [aures?
Commaculavi egone humanum genus, improbe?
Culpa,
Dum rapis, et captas omnia, culpa tua est.
Mene execrandum censes, quia tam pretiosa
Criminibus fiunt perniciosa tuis?
Virtutis specie, pulchro ceu pallio amictus
Quisque catus nebulo sordida facta tegit.
Atque suis manibus commissa potentia, durum
Et dirum subito vergit ad imperium.
Hinc, nimium dum latro aurum detrudit in arcam,
Idem aurum latet in pectore pestis edax.
Nutrit avaritiam et fastum, suspendere adunco
Suadet naso inopes, et vitium omne docet.
Auri et larga probo si copia contigit, instar
Roris dilapsi ex æthere cuncta beat:
Tum, quasi numen inesset, alit, fovet, educat
Et viduas lacrymis ora rigare vetat. [orbos,
Quo sua crimina jure auro derivet avarus,
Aurum animæ pretium qui cupit atque capit?
Lege pari gladium incuset sicarius atrox
Cæso homine, et ferrum judicet esse reum.

PAPILIO ET LIMAX.

Qui subito ex imis rerum in fastigia surgit,
Nativas sordes, quicquid agatur, olet.

TRANSLATION FROM VIRGIL.

ÆNEID, BOOK VIII. LINE 18.

Thus Italy was moved—nor did the chief
Æneas in his mind less tumult feel.
On every side his anxious thought he turns,
Restless, unfix'd, not knowing what to choose.
And as a cistern that in brim of brass
Confines the crystal flood, if chance the sun
Smite on it, or the moon's resplendent orb,
The quivering light now flashes on the walls,
Now leaps uncertain to the vaulted roof:
Such were the wavering motions of his mind.
'Twas night—and weary nature sunk to rest.
The birds, the bleating flocks, were heard no more.
At length, on the cold ground, beneath the damp
And dewy vault, fast by the river's brink,
The father of his country sought repose.
When lo! among the spreading poplar boughs,
Forth from his pleasant stream, propitious rose
The god of Tiber: clear transparent gauze
Infolds his loins, his brows with reeds are crown'd:
And these his gracious words to soothe his care:
"Heaven-born, who bringst our kindred home again.
Rescued, and givest eternity to Troy,
Long have Laurentum and the Latian plains
Expected thee; behold thy fix'd abode.

Fear not the threats of war, the storm is pass'd,
The gods appeased. For proof that what thou
Is no vain forgery or delusive dream, [hear'st
Beneath the grove that borders my green bank,
A milk-white swine, with thirty milk-white young,
Shall greet thy wondering eyes. Mark well the
place;
For 'tis thy place of rest, there end thy toils:
There, twice ten years elapsed, fair Alba's walls
Shall rise, fair Alba, by Ascanius' hand.
Thus shall it be—now listen, while I teach
The means to accomplish these events at hand.
The Arcadians here, a race from Pallas sprung,
Following Evander's standard and his fate,
High on these mountains, a well chosen spot,
Have built a city, for their grandsire's sake
Named Pallanteum. These perpetual war
Wage with the Latians: join'd in faithful league
And arms confederate, add them to your camp.
Myself between my winding banks will speed
Your well-oar'd barks to stem the opposing tide.
Rise, goddess-born, arise; and with the first
Declining stars seek Juno in thy prayer,
And vanquish all her wrath with suppliant vows.
When conquest crowns thee, then remember me.
I am the Tiber, whose cerulean stream
Heaven favours; I with copious flood divide
These grassy banks, and cleave the fruitful meads.
My mansion, this—and lofty cities crown [deep,
My fountain head."—He spoke and sought the

And plunged his form beneath the closing flood.
Æneas at the morning dawn awoke,
And, rising, with uplifted eye beheld
The orient sun, then dipp'd his palms, and scoop'd
The brimming stream, and thus address'd the skies:
"Ye nymphs, Laurentian nymphs, who feed the source
Of many a stream, and thou, with thy blest flood,
O Tiber, hear, accept me, and afford,
At length afford, a shelter from my woes.
Where'er in secret cavern under ground
Thy waters sleep, where'er they spring to light,
Since thou hast pity for a wretch like me,
My offerings and my vows shall wait thee still:
Great horned Father of Hesperian floods,
Be gracious now, and ratify thy word."
He said, and chose two galleys from his fleet,
Fits them with oars, and clothes the crew in arms.
When lo! astonishing and pleasing sight,
The milk-white dam, with her unspotted brood,
Lay stretch'd upon the bank, beneath the grove.
To thee, the pious Prince, Juno, to thee
Devotes them all, all on thine altar bleed.
That livelong night old Tiber smooth'd his flood,
And so restrain'd it that it seem'd to stand
Motionless as a pool, or silent lake,
That not a billow might resist their oars.
With cheerful sound of exhortation soon
Their voyage they begin; the pitchy keel
Slides through the gentle deep, the quiet stream

Admires the unwonted burthen that it bears,
Well polish'd arms, and vessels painted gay.
Beneath the shade of various trees, between
The umbrageous branches of the spreading groves,
They cut their liquid way, nor day nor night
They slack their course, unwinding as they go
The long meanders of the peaceful tide.

The glowing sun was in meridian height,
When from afar they saw the humble walls,
And the few scatter'd cottages, which now
The Roman power has equall'd with the clouds;
But such was then Evander's scant domain.
They steer to shore, and hasten to the town.

It chanced the Arcadian monarch on that day,
Before the walls, beneath a shady grove,
Was celebrating high, in solemn feast,
Alcides and his tutelary gods.
Pallas, his son, was there, and there the chief
Of all his youth; with these, a worthy tribe,
His poor but venerable senate, burnt
Sweet incense, and their altars smoked with blood.
Soon as they saw the towering masts approach,
Sliding between the trees, while the crew rest
Upon their silent oars, amazed they rose,
Not without fear, and all forsook the feast.
But Pallas undismay'd, his javelin seized,
Rush'd to the bank, and from a rising ground
Forbade them to disturb the sacred rites.
"Ye stranger youth! What prompts you to explore
This untried way? and whither do ye steer?

Whence, and who are ye? Bring ye peace or war?"
Æneas from his lofty deck holds forth
The peaceful olive branch, and thus replies:
"Trojans and enemies to the Latian state,
Whom they with unprovoked hostilities
Have driven away, thou see'st. We seek Evander—
Say this—and say beside, the Trojan chiefs
Are come, and seek his friendship and his aid."
Pallas with wonder heard that awful name,
And, "Whosoe'er thou art," he cried, "come forth;
Bear thine own tidings to my father's ear,
And be a welcome guest beneath our roof."
He said, and press'd the stranger to his breast:
Then led him from the river to the grove,
Where, courteous, thus Æneas greets the king:
"Best of the Grecian race, to whom I bow
(So wills my fortune) suppliant, and stretch forth
In sign of amity this peaceful branch,
I fear'd thee not, although I knew thee well
A Grecian leader, born in Arcady,
And kinsman of the Atridæ. Me my virtue,
That means no wrong to thee—the Oracles,
Our kindred families allied of old,
And thy renown diffused through every land,
Have all conspired to bind in friendship to thee,
And send me not unwilling to thy shores.
Dardanus, author of the Trojan state,
(So say the Greeks) was fair Electra's son;
Electra boasted Atlas for her sire,
Whose shoulders high sustain the æthereal orbs.

Your sire is Mercury, whom Maia bore,
Sweet Maia, on Cyllene's hoary top.
Her, if we credit aught tradition old,
Atlas of yore, the selfsame Atlas, claim'd
His daughter. Thus united close in blood,
Thy race and ours one common sire confess.
With these credentials fraught, I would not send
Ambassadors with artful phrase to sound
And win thee by degrees—but came myself—
Me, therefore, me thou seest; my life the stake:
'Tis I, Æneas, who implore thine aid.
Should Daunia, that now aims the blow at thee,
Prevail to conquer us, nought then, they think,
Will hinder but Hesperia must be theirs,
All theirs, from the upper to the nether sea.
Take then our friendship, and return us thine.
We too have courage, we have noble minds,
And youth well tried, and exercised in arms."

Thus spoke Æneas—He with fix'd regard
Survey'd him speaking, features, form, and mien,
Then briefly thus—"Thou noblest of thy name,
How gladly do I take thee to my heart,
How gladly thus confess thee for a friend!
In thee I trace Anchises; his thy speech,
Thy voice, thy countenance. For I well remember
Many a day since, when Priam journey'd forth
To Salamis, to see the land where dwelt
Hesione, his sister, he push'd on
E'en to Arcadia's frozen bounds. 'Twas then
The bloom of youth was glowing on my cheek;

Much I admired the Trojan chiefs, and much
Their king, the son of great Laomedon,
But most Anchises, towering o'er them all.
A youthful longing seized me to accost
The hero, and embrace him; I drew near,
And gladly led him to the walls of Pheneus.
Departing, he distinguish'd me with gifts,
A costly quiver stored with Lycian darts,
A robe inwove with gold, with gold emboss'd,
Two bridles, those which Pallas uses now.
The friendly league thou hast solicited
I give thee, therefore, and to-morrow all
My chosen youth shall wait on your return.
Meanwhile, since thus in friendship ye are come,
Rejoice with us, and join to celebrate
These annual rites, which may not be delay'd,
And be at once familiar at our board."

He said, and bade replace the feast removed;
Himself upon a grassy bank disposed
The crew; but for Æneas order'd forth
A couch spread with a lion's tawny shag,
And bade him share the honours of his throne.
The appointed youth with glad alacrity
Assist the labouring priest to load the board
With roasted entrails of the slaughter'd beeves,
Well kneaded bread and mantling bowls. Well pleased,
Æneas and the Trojan youth regale
On the huge length of a well pastured chine.

Hunger appeased, and tables all despatch'd,
Thus spake Evander: "Superstition here,

In this old solemn feasting, has no part.
No, Trojan friend, from utmost danger saved,
In gratitude this worship we renew.
Behold that rock which nods above the vale,
Those bulks of broken stone dispersed around,
How desolate the shatter'd cave appears,
And what a ruin spreads the incumber'd plain.
Within this pile, but far within, was once
The den of Cacus; dire his hateful form
That shunn'd the day, half monster and half man.
Blood newly shed stream'd ever on the ground
Smoking, and many a visage pale and wan
Nail'd at his gate, hung hideous to the sight.
Vulcan begot the brute: vast was his size,
And from his throat he belch'd his father's fires.
But the day came that brought us what we wish'd,
The assistance and the presence of a God.
Flush'd with his victory, and the spoils he won
From triple-form'd Geryon lately slain,
The great avenger, Hercules, appear'd.
Hither he drove his stately bulls, and pour'd
His herds along the vale. But the sly thief
Cacus, that nothing might escape his hand
Of villany or fraud, drove from the stalls
Four of the lordliest of his bulls, and four
The fairest of his heifers; by the tail
He dragg'd them to his den, that, there conceal'd,
No footsteps might betray the dark abode.
And now his herd with provender sufficed,
Alcides would be gone: they as they went

Still bellowing loud, made the deep echoing woods
And distant hills resound: when hark! one ox,
Imprison'd close within the vast recess,
Lows in return, and frustrates all his hope.
Then fury seized Alcides, and his breast
With indignation heaved: grasping his club
Of knotted oak, swift to the mountain top
He ran, he flew. Then first was Cacus seen
To tremble, and his eyes bespoke his fears.
Swift as an eastern blast he sought his den,
And dread, increasing, wing'd him as he went.
Drawn up in iron slings above the gate,
A rock was hung enormous. Such his haste,
He burst the chains, and dropp'd it at the door,
Then grappled it with iron work within
Of bolts and bars by Vulcan's art contrived.
Scarce was he fast, when panting for revenge
Came Hercules; he gnash'd his teeth with rage,
And quick as lightning glanced his eyes around
In quest of entrance. Fiery red and stung
With indignation, thrice he wheel'd his course
About the mountain; thrice, but thrice in vain.
He strove to force the quarry at the gate,
And thrice sat down o'erwearied in the vale.
There stood a pointed rock, abrupt and rude,
That high o'erlook'd the rest, close at the back
Of the fell monster's den, where birds obscene
Of ominous note resorted, choughs and daws.
This, as it lean'd obliquely to the left,
Threatening the stream below, he from the right

Push'd with his utmost strength, and to and fro
He shook the mass, loosening its lowest base;
Then shoved it from its seat; down fell the pile;
Sky thunder'd at the fall; the banks give way,
The affrighted stream flows upward to his source.
Behold the kennel of the brute exposed,
The gloomy vault laid open. So, if chance
Earth yawning to the centre should disclose
The mansions, the pale mansions of the dead,
Loathed by the gods, such would the gulf appear,
And the ghosts tremble at the sight of day.
The monster braying with unusual din
Within his hollow lair, and sore amazed
To see such sudden inroads of the light,
Alcides press'd him close with what at hand
Lay readiest, stumps of trees, and fragments huge
Of millstone size. He, (for escape was none)
Wondrous to tell! forth from his gorge discharged
A smoky cloud that darken'd all the den;
Wreath after wreath he vomited amain,
The smothering vapour mix'd with fiery sparks.
No sight could penetrate the veil obscure.
The hero, more provoked, endured not this,
But with a headlong leap he rush'd to where
The thickest cloud enveloped his abode.
There grasp'd he Cacus, spite of all his fires,
Till crush'd within his arms, the monster shows
His bloodless throat, now dry with panting hard,
And his press'd eyeballs start. Soon he tears down
The barricade of rock, the dark abyss

Lies open ; and the imprison'd bulls, the theft
He had with oaths denied, are brought to light ;
By the heels the miscreant carcass is dragg'd forth,
His face, his eyes, all terrible, his breast
Beset with bristles, and his sooty jaws
Are view'd with wonder never to be cloy'd.
Hence the celebrity thou seest, and hence
This festal day. Potitius first enjoin'd
Posterity these solemn rites, he first
With those who bear the great Pinarian name
To Hercules devoted, in the grove
This altar built, deem'd sacred in the highest
By us, and sacred ever to be deem'd.
Come then, my friends, and bind your youthful brows
In praise of such deliverance, and hold forth
The brimming cup ; your deities and ours
Are now the same, then drink, and freely too.
So saying, he twisted round his reverend locks
A variegated poplar wreath, and fill'd
His right hand with a consecrated bowl.
At once all pour libations on the board,
All offer prayer. And now the radiant sphere
Of day descending, eventide drew near.
When first Potitius with the priests advanced,
Begirt with skins, and torches in their hands.
High piled with meats of savoury taste, they ranged
The chargers, and renew'd the grateful feast.
Then came the Salii, crown'd with poplar too,
Circling the blazing altars ; here the youth
Advanced, a choir harmonious, there were heard

The reverend seers responsive; praise they sung,
Much praise in honour of Alcides' deeds;
How first with infant gripe two serpents huge
He strangled, sent from Juno; next they sung,
How Troja and Oechalia he destroy'd,
Fair cities both, and many a toilsome task
Beneath Eurystheus (so his stepdame will'd)
Achieved victorious. Thou, the cloud-born pair,
Hylæus fierce and Pholus, monstrous twins,
Thou slew'st the minotaur, the plague of Crete,
And the vast lion of the Nemean rock,
Thee hell, and Cerberus, hell's porter, fear'd,
Stretch'd in his den upon his half gnaw'd bones.
Thee no abhorred form, not e'en the vast
Typhœus could appall, though clad in arms.
Hail, true born son of Jove, among the gods
At length enroll'd, nor least illustrious thou,
Haste thee propitious, and approve our songs:—
Thus hymn'd the chorus; above all they sing
The cave of Cacus, and the flames he breathed.
The whole grove echoes, and the hills rebound.
The rites perform'd, all hasten to the town.
The king, bending with age, held as he went
Æneas, and his Pallas by the hand,
With much variety of pleasing talk
Shortening the way. Æneas, with a smile, [scene,
Looks round him, charm'd with the delightful
And many a question asks, and much he learns
Of heroes far renown'd in ancient times.
Then spake Evander. These extensive groves

Were once inhabited by fawns and nymphs
Produced beneath their shades, and a rude race
Of men, the progeny uncouth of elms
And knotted oaks. They no refinement knew
Of laws or manners civilized, to yoke
The steer, with forecast provident to store
The hoarded grain, or manage what they had,
But browsed like beasts upon the leafy boughs,
Or fed voracious on their hunted prey.
An exile from Olympus, and expell'd
His native realm by thunder-bearing Jove,
First Saturn came. He from the mountains drew
This herd of men untractable and fierce,
And gave them laws: and call'd his hiding place,
This growth of forests, Latium. Such the peace
His land possess'd, the golden age was then,
So famed in story; till by slow degrees
Far other times, and of far different hue,
Succeeded, thirst of gold and thirst of blood.
Then came Ausonian bands, and armed hosts
From Sicily, and Latium often changed
Her master and her name. At length arose
Kings, of whom Tybris of gigantic form
Was chief; and we Italians since have call'd
The river by his name; thus Albula
(So was the country call'd in ancient days)
Was quite forgot. Me from my native land
An exile, through the dangerous ocean driven,
Resistless fortune and relentless fate,
Placed where thou seest me. Phœbus, and

The nymph Carmentis, with maternal care
Attendant on my wanderings, fix'd me here.

[Ten lines omitted.]

He said, and show'd him the Tarpeian rock,
And the rude spot where now the capitol
Stands all magnificent and bright with gold,
Then overgrown with thorns. And yet e'en then
The swains beheld that sacred scene with awe;
The grove, the rock, inspired religious fear.
This grove, he said, that crowns the lofty top
Of this fair hill, some deity, we know,
Inhabits, but what deity we doubt.
The Arcadians speak of Jupiter himself,
That they have often seen him, shaking here
His gloomy Ægis, while the thunder storms
Came rolling all around him. Turn thine eyes,
Behold that ruin; those dismantled walls,
Where once two towns, Ianiculum ——,
By Janus this, and that by Saturn built,
Saturnia. Such discourse brought them beneath
The roof of poor Evander; thence they saw,
Where now the proud and stately forum stands,
The grazing herds wide scatter'd o'er the field.
Soon as he enter'd—Hercules, he said,
Victorious Hercules, on this threshold trod,
These walls contain'd him, humble as they are.
Dare to despise magnificence, my friend,
Prove thy divine descent by worth divine,
Nor view with haughty scorn this mean abode.

So saying, he led Æneas by the hand,
And placed him on a cushion stuff'd with leaves,
Spread with the skin of a Lybistian bear.

[The Episode of Venus and Vulcan omitted.]

While thus in Lemnos Vulcan was employ'd,
Awaken'd by the gentle dawn of day,
And the shrill song of birds beneath the eaves
Of his low mansion, old Evander rose.
His tunic, and the sandals on his feet,
And his good sword well girded to his side,
A panther's skin dependent from his left,
And over his right shoulder thrown aslant,
Thus was he clad. Two mastiffs follow'd him,
His whole retinue and his nightly guard.

OVID. TRIST. LIB. V. ELEG. XII.

Scribis, ut oblectem.

You bid me write to amuse the tedious hours,
And save from withering my poetic powers;
Hard is the task, my friend, for verse should flow
From the free mind, not fetter'd down by woe;
Restless amidst unceasing tempests toss'd,
Whoe'er has cause for sorrow, I have most.
Would you bid Priam laugh, his sons all slain,
Or childless Niobe from tears refrain,
Join the gay dance, and lead the festive train?

Does grief or study most befit the mind
To this remote, this barbarous nook confined?
Could you impart to my unshaken breast
The fortitude by Socrates possess'd,
Soon would it sink beneath such woes as mine,
For what is human strength to wrath divine?
Wise as he was, and heaven pronounced him so,
My sufferings would have laid that wisdom low.
Could I forget my country, thee and all,
And e'en the offence to which I owe my fall,
Yet fear alone would freeze the poet's vein,
While hostile troops swarm o'er the dreary plain.
Add that the fatal rust of long disuse
Unfits me for the service of the Muse.
Thistles and weeds are all we can expect
From the best soil impoverish'd by neglect;
Unexercised, and to his stall confined,
The fleetest racer would be left behind;
The best built bark that cleaves the watery way,
Laid useless by, would moulder and decay—
No hope remains that time shall me restore,
Mean as I was, to what I was before.
Think how a series of desponding cares
Benumbs the genius, and its force impairs.
How oft, as now, on this devoted sheet,
My verse constrain'd to move with measured feet,
Reluctant and laborious limps along,
And proves itself a wretched exile's song.
What is it tunes the most melodious lays?
'Tis emulation and the thirst of praise,

A noble thirst, and not unknown to me,
While smoothly wafted on a calmer sea.
But can a wretch like Ovid pant for fame?
No, rather let the world forget my name.
Is it because that world approved my strain,
You prompt me to the same pursuit again?
No, let the Nine the ungrateful truth excuse,
I charge my hopeless ruin on the Muse,
And, like Perillus, meet my just desert,
The victim of my own pernicious art,
Fool that I was to be so warn'd in vain,
And shipwreck'd once, to tempt the deep again.
Ill fares the bard in this unletter'd land,
None to consult, and none to understand.
The purest verse has no admirers here,
Their own rude language only suits their ear.
Rude as it is, at length familiar grown,
I learn it, and almost unlearn my own—
Yet to say truth, e'en here the Muse disdains
Confinement, and attempts her former strains,
But finds the strong desire is not the power,
And what her taste condemns, the flames devour.
A part, perhaps, like this, escapes the doom,
And though unworthy, finds a friend at Rome;
But oh the cruel art, that could undo
Its votary thus! would that could perish too!

THE FIFTH SATIRE OF THE FIRST BOOK OF HORACE.

A HUMOROUS DESCRIPTION OF THE AUTHOR'S JOURNEY FROM ROME TO BRUNDUSIUM.

'Twas a long journey lay before us,
When I and honest Heliodorus,
Who far in point of rhetoric
Surpasses every living Greek,
Each leaving our respective home,
Together sallied forth from Rome.
First at Aricia we alight,
And there refresh, and pass the night,
Our entertainment rather coarse
Than sumptuous, but I've met with worse.
Thence o'er the causeway soft and fair
To Appiiforum we repair.
But as this road is well supplied
(Temptation strong!) on either side
With inns commodious, snug, and warm,
We split the journey, and perform
In two days' time what's often done
By brisker travellers in one.
Here, rather choosing not to sup
Than with bad water mix my cup,
After a warm debate in spite
Of a provoking appetite,

I sturdily resolved at last
To balk it, and pronounce a fast,
And in a moody humour wait,
While my less dainty comrades bait.
  Now o'er the spangled hemisphere
Diffused the starry train appear,
When there arose a desperate brawl:
The slaves and bargemen, one and all,
Rending their throats (have mercy on us)
As if they were resolved to stun us.
"Steer the barge this way to the shore;
I tell you we'll admit no more;
Plague! will you never be content?"
Thus a whole hour at least is spent,
While they receive the several fares,
And kick the mule into his gears.
Happy, these difficulties past,
Could we have fallen asleep at last!
But, what with humming, croaking, biting,
Gnats, frogs, and all their plagues uniting,
These tuneful natives of the lake
Conspired to keep us broad awake.
Besides, to make the concert full,
Two maudlin wights, exceeding dull,
The bargeman and a passenger,
Each in his turn, essay'd an air
In honour of his absent fair.
At length the passenger, opprest
With wine, left off, and snored the rest.
The weary bargeman too gave o'er,

And hearing his companion snore,
Seized the occasion, fix'd the barge,
Turn'd out his mule to graze at large,
And slept forgetful of his charge.
And now the sun o'er eastern hill
Discover'd that our barge stood still;
When one, whose anger vex'd him sore,
With malice fraught, leaps quick on shore;
Plucks up a stake, with many a thwack
Assails the mule and driver's back.
Then slowly moving on with pain,
At ten Feronia's stream we gain,
And in her pure and glassy wave
Our hands and faces gladly lave.
Climbing three miles, fair Anxur's height
We reach, with stony quarries white.
While here, as was agreed, we wait,
Till, charged with business of the state,
Mæcenas and Cocceius come,
The messengers of peace from Rome.
My eyes, by watery humours blear
And sore, I with black balsam smear.
At length they join us, and with them
Our worthy friend Fonteius came;
A man of such complete desert,
Antony loved him at his heart.
At Fundi we refused to bait,
And laugh'd at vain Aufidius' state,
A prætor now, a scribe before,
The purple-border'd robe he wore,

His slave the smoking censer bore.
Tired, at Muræna's we repose,
At Formia sup at Capito's.
With smiles the rising morn we greet,
At Sinuessa pleased to meet
With Plotius, Varius, and the bard
Whom Mantua first with wonder heard.
The world no purer spirits knows;
For none my heart more warmly glows.
O! what embraces we bestow'd,
And with what joy our breasts o'erflow'd!
Sure, while my sense is sound and clear,
Long as I live, I shall prefer
A gay, goodnatured, easy friend,
To every blessing Heaven can send.
At a small village the next night
Near the Vulturnus we alight;
Where, as employ'd on state affairs,
We were supplied by the purveyors
Frankly at once, and without hire,
With food for man and horse, and fire.
Capua next day betimes we reach,
Where Virgil and myself, who each
Labour'd with different maladies,
His such a stomach, mine such eyes,
As would not bear strong exercise,
In drowsy mood to sleep resort;
Mæcenas to the tennis-court.
Next at Cocceius' farm were treated,
Above the Caudian tavern seated;

His kind and hospitable board
With choice of wholesome food was stored.
Now, O ye Nine, inspire my lays!
To nobler themes my fancy raise!
Two combatants, who scorn to yield
The noisy, tongue-disputed field,
Sarmentus and Cicirrus, claim
A poet's tribute to their fame;
Cicirrus of true Oscian breed,
Sarmentus, who was never freed,
But ran away. We don't defame him;
His lady lives, and still may claim him.
Thus dignified, in harder fray
These champions their keen wit display,
And first Sarmentus led the way.
"Thy locks," quoth he, "so rough and coarse,
Look like the mane of some wild horse."
We laugh: Cicirrus undismay'd—
"Have at you!"—cries, and shakes his head.
"'Tis well," Sarmentus says, "you've lost
That horn your forehead once could boast;
Since, maim'd and mangled as you are,
You seem to butt." A hideous scar
Improved, 'tis true, with double grace
The native horrors of his face.
Well. After much jocosely said
Of his grim front, so fiery red,
(For carbuncles had blotch'd it o'er,
As usual on Campania's shore)
"Give us," he cried, "since you're so big,

A sample of the Cyclops' jig!
Your shanks methinks no buskins ask,
Nor does your phiz require a mask."
To this Cicirrus: "In return
Of you, Sir, now I fain would learn,
When 'twas, no longer deem'd a slave,
Your chains you to the Lares gave.
For though a scrivener's right you claim,
Your lady's title is the same.
But what could make you run away,
Since, pigmy as you are, each day
A single pound of bread would quite
O'erpower your puny appetite?"
Thus joked the champions, while we laugh'd,
And many a cheerful bumper quaff'd.
To Beneventum next we steer;
Where our good host by over care
In roasting thrushes lean as mice
Had almost fallen a sacrifice.
The kitchen soon was all on fire,
And to the roof the flames aspire;
There might you see each man and master
Striving, amidst this sad disaster,
To save the supper. Then they came
With speed enough to quench the flame.
From hence we first at distance see
The Apulian hills, well known to me,
Parch'd by the sultry western blast;
And which we never should have past,
Had not Trivicius by the way

Received us at the close of day.
But each was forced at entering here
To pay the tribute of a tear,
For more of smoke than fire was seen—
The hearth was piled with logs so green.
From hence in chaises we were carried
Miles twenty four, and gladly tarried
At a small town, whose name my verse
(So barbarous is it) can't rehearse.
Know it you may by many a sign,
Water is dearer far than wine.
There bread is deem'd such dainty fare,
That every prudent traveller
His wallet loads with many a crust;
For at Canusium you might just
As well attempt to gnaw a stone
As think to get a morsel down:
That too with scanty streams is fed;
Its founder was brave Diomed.
Good Varius (ah, that friends must part!)
Here left us all with aching heart.
At Rubi we arrived that day,
Well jaded by the length of way,
And sure poor mortals ne'er were wetter:
Next day no weather could be better;
No roads so bad; we scarce could crawl
Along to fishy Barium's wall.
The Egnatians next, who by the rules
Of common sense are knaves or fools,
Made all our sides with laughter heave,

Since we with them must needs believe
That incense in their temples burns,
And without fire to ashes turns.
To circumcision's bigots tell
Such tales! for me, I know full well
That in high heaven, unmoved by care,
The gods eternal quiet share:
Nor can I deem their spleen the cause,
Why fickle Nature breaks her laws.
Brundusium last we reach: and there
Stop short the muse and traveller.

1759.

THE NINTH SATIRE OF THE FIRST BOOK OF HORACE.

DESCRIPTION OF AN IMPERTINENT. ADAPTED TO THE PRESENT TIMES, 1759.

SAUNTERING along the street one day,
On trifles musing by the way—
Up steps a free familiar wight,
(I scarcely knew the man by sight.)
"Carlos," he cried, "your hand, my dear,
Gad, I rejoice to meet you here!
Pray heaven I see you well?" "So so;
E'en well enough as times now go.
The same good wishes, Sir, to you."
Finding he still pursued me close—
"Sir, you have business I suppose."

"My business, Sir, is quickly done,
'Tis but to make my merit known.
Sir, I have read"—"O learned Sir,
You and your learning I revere."
Then sweating with anxiety,
And sadly longing to get free,
Gods, how I scamper'd, scuffled for't,
Ran, halted, ran again, stopp'd short,
Beckon'd my boy, and pull'd him near,
And whisper'd nothing in his ear.
Teased with his loose unjointed chat—
"What street is this? What house is that?"
O Harlow, how I envied thee
Thy unabash'd effrontery,
Who darest a foe with freedom blame,
And call a coxcomb by his name!
When I return'd him answer none,
Obligingly the fool ran on,
"I see you're dismally distress'd,
Would give the world to be released.
But by your leave, Sir, I shall still
Stick to your skirts, do what you will.
Pray which way does your journey tend?"
"O, 'tis a tedious way, my friend;
Across the Thames, the Lord knows where,
I would not trouble you so far."
"Well, I'm at leisure to attend you."
"Are you?" thought I, "the de'il befriend you."
No ass with double panniers rack'd,
Oppress'd, o'erladen, broken-back'd,

E'er look'd a thousandth part so dull
As I, nor half so like a fool.
"Sir, I know little of myself,
(Proceeds the pert conceited elf)
If Gray or Mason you will deem
Than me more worthy your esteem.
Poems I write by folios
As fast as other men write prose;
Then I can sing so loud, so clear,
That Beard cannot with me compare.
In dancing too I all surpass,
Not Cooke can move with such a grace."
Here I made shift with much ado
To interpose a word or two.—
"Have you no parents, Sir, no friends,
Whose welfare on your own depends?"
"Parents, relations, say you? No.
They're all disposed of long ago."—
"Happy to be no more perplex'd!
My fate too threatens, I go next.
Dispatch me, Sir, 'tis now too late,
Alas! to struggle with my fate!
Well, I'm convinced my time is come—
When young, a gipsy told my doom."
The beldame shook her palsied head,
As she perused my palm, and said:
"Of poison, pestilence, or war,
Gout, stone, defluxion, or catarrh,
You have no reason to beware.
Beware the coxcomb's idle prate;

Chiefly, my son, beware of that.
Be sure, when you behold him, fly
Out of all earshot, or you die."
To Rufus' Hall, we now draw near!
Where he was summon'd to appear,
Refute the charge the plaintiff brought,
Or suffer judgment by default.
"For Heaven's sake, if you love me, wait
One moment! I'll be with you straight."
Glad of a plausible pretence—
"Sir, I must beg you to dispense
With my attendance in the court.
My legs will surely suffer for't."
"Nay, prithee, Carlos, stop awhile!"
"Faith, Sir, in law I have no skill.
Besides, I have no time to spare,
I must be going you know where."
"Well, I protest, I'm doubtful now
Whether to leave my suit or you!"
"Me without scruple!" I reply,
"Me by all means, Sir!"—"No, not I.
Allons, Monsieur!" 'Twere vain, you know,
To strive with a victorious foe.
So I reluctantly obey,
And follow where he leads the way.
"You and Newcastle are so close,
Still hand and glove, Sir—I suppose."—
"Newcastle, let me tell you, Sir,
Has not his equal every where."
"Well. There indeed your fortune's made.

Faith, Sir, you understand your trade.
Would you but give me your good word:
Just introduce me to my lord,
I should serve charmingly by way
Of second fiddle, as they say:
What think you, Sir? 'twere a good jest.
'Slife, we should quickly scout the rest."
"Sir, you mistake the matter far,
We have no second fiddles there—
Richer than I some folks may be;
More learned, but it hurts not me.
Friends though he has of different kind,
Each has his proper place assign'd."
"Strange matters these alleged by you!"
"Strange they may be, but they are true."—
"Well then, I vow, 'tis mighty clever,
Now I long ten times more than ever
To be advanced extremely near
One of his shining character.
Have but the will—there wants no more,
'Tis plain enough you have the power.
His easy temper (that's the worst)
He knows, and is so shy at first.—
But such a cavalier as you—
Lord, Sir, you'll quickly bring him to!—
Well! if I fail in my design,
Sir, it shall be no fault of mine.
If by the saucy servile tribe
Denied, what think you of a bribe?
Shut out to-day, not die with sorrow,

But try my luck again to-morrow.
Never attempt to visit him
But at the most convenient time,
Attend him on each levee day,
And there my humble duty pay,
Labour, like this, our want supplies;
And they must stoop who mean to rise."
While thus he wittingly harangued,
For which you'll guess I wish'd him hang'd,
Campley, a friend of mine, came by.
Who knew his humour more than I;
We stop, salute, and—"Why so fast,
Friend Carlos? Whither all this haste?"—
Fired at the thoughts of a reprieve,
I pinch him, pull him, twitch his sleeve,
Nod, beckon, bite my lips, wink, pout,
Do everything but speak plain out:
While he, sad dog, from the beginning
Determined to mistake my meaning,
Instead of pitying my curse,
By jeering made it ten times worse.
"Campley, what secret (pray!) was that
You wanted to communicate?"
"I recollect. But 'tis no matter.
Carlos, we'll talk of that hereafter.
E'en let the secret rest. 'Twill tell
Another time, Sir, just as well."
Was ever such a dismal day?
Unlucky cur, he steals away,
And leaves me, half bereft of life,

At mercy of the butcher's knife;
When sudden, shouting from afar,
See his antagonist appear!
The bailiff seized him, quick as thought,
"Ho, Mr. Scoundrel! Are you caught?
Sir, you are witness to the arrest."
"Ay, marry, Sir, I'll do my best."
The mob huzzas. Away they trudge,
Culprit and all, before the judge.
Meanwhile, I luckily enough
(Thanks to Apollo) got clear off.

HOR. LIB. I. ODE IX.

Vides, ut altâ stet nive candidum
Soracte ; . . . .

Seest thou yon mountain laden with deep snow,
The groves beneath their fleecy burthen bow,
The streams, congeal'd, forget to flow,
Come, thaw the cold, and lay a cheerful pile
Of fuel on the hearth;
Broach the best cask, and make old winter smile
With seasonable mirth.

This be our part—let Heaven dispose the rest;
If Jove command, the winds shall sleep
That now wage war upon the foamy deep,
And gentle gales spring from the balmy west.

E'en let us shift to-morrow as we may,
When to-morrow's pass'd away,
We at least shall have to say,
We have lived another day;
Your auburn locks will soon be silver'd o'er,
Old age is at our heels, and youth returns no more.

HOR. LIB. I. ODE XXXVIII.

Persicos odi, puer, apparatus.

Boy, I hate their empty shows,
Persian garlands I detest,
Bring not me the late-blown rose,
Lingering after all the rest.

Plainer myrtle pleases me,
Thus outstretch'd beneath my vine;
Myrtle more becoming thee,
Waiting with thy master's wine.

HOR. LIB. I. ODE XXXVIII.

Boy! I detest all Persian fopperies,
Fillet-bound garlands are to me disgusting;
Task not thyself with any search, I charge thee,
Where latest roses linger,
Bring me alone (for thou wilt find that readily)
Plain myrtle. Myrtle neither will disparage
Thee occupied to serve me, or me drinking
Beneath my vine's cool shelter.

HOR. LIB. II. ODE X.

Receive, dear friend, the truths I teach,
So shalt thou live beyond the reach
Of adverse fortune's power;
Not always tempt the distant deep,
Nor always timorously creep
Along the treacherous shore.

He that holds fast the golden mean,
And lives contentedly between
The little and the great,
Feels not the wants that pinch the poor,
Nor plagues that haunt the rich man's door,
Imbittering all his state.

The tallest pines feel most the power
Of wintry blasts; the loftiest tower
  Comes heaviest to the ground;
The bolts that spare the mountain's side
His cloudcapt eminence divide,
  And spread the ruin round.

The well-inform'd philosopher
Rejoices with a wholesome fear,
  And hopes in spite of pain;
If Winter bellow from the north,
Soon the sweet Spring comes dancing forth,
  And Nature laughs again.

What if thine Heaven be overcast,
The dark appearance will not last;
  Expect a brighter sky.
The God that strings the silver bow
Awakes sometimes the Muses too,
  And lays his arrows by.

If hindrances obstruct thy way,
Thy magnanimity display,
  And let thy strength be seen;
But O! if Fortune fill thy sail
With more than a propitious gale,
  Take half thy canvas in.

A REFLECTION ON THE FOREGOING ODE.

And is this all? Can Reason do no more
Than bid me shun the deep, and dread the shore?
Sweet moralist! afloat on life's rough sea,
The Christian has an art unknown to thee:
He holds no parley with unmanly fears;
Where Duty bids he confidently steers,
Faces a thousand dangers at her call,
And, trusting in his God, surmounts them all.

HOR. LIB. II. ODE XVI.

Otium Divos rogat in patenti.

Ease is the weary merchant's prayer,
Who ploughs by night the Ægean flood,
When neither moon nor stars appear,
Or faintly glimmer through the cloud.

For ease the Mede with quiver graced,
For ease the Thracian hero sighs,
Delightful ease all pant to taste,
A blessing which no treasure buys.

For neither gold can lull to rest,
Nor all a Consul's guard beat off
The tumults of a troubled breast,
The cares that haunt a gilded roof.

Happy the man whose table shows
A few clean ounces of old plate,
No fear intrudes on his repose,
No sordid wishes to be great.

Poor short lived things, what plans we lay!
Ah, why forsake our native home!
To distant climates speed away;
For self sticks close where'er we roam.

Care follows hard, and soon o'ertakes
The well rigg'd ship, the warlike steed.
Her destined quarry ne'er forsakes,
Not the wind flies with half her speed.

From anxious fears of future ill
Guard well the cheerful, happy now;
Gild e'en your sorrows with a smile,
No blessing is unmix'd below.

Thy neighing steeds and lowing herds,
Thy numerous flocks around thee graze,
And the best purple Tyre affords
Thy robe magnificent displays.

On me indulgent Heaven bestow'd
A rural mansion, neat and small;
This lyre;—and as for yonder crowd,
The happiness to hate them all.

TIROCINIUM;

OR, A REVIEW OF SCHOOLS.

Κεφάλαιον δὴ παιδείας ὀρθὴ τροφή.

PLATO.

Ἀρχὴ πολιτείας ἀπάσης νέων τροφαί.

DIOG. LAERT.

TO THE

REV. WILLIAM CAWTHORNE UNWIN,

RECTOR OF STOCK IN ESSEX, THE TUTOR OF HIS TWO SONS, THE FOLLOWING POEM, RECOMMENDING PRIVATE TUITION IN PREFERENCE TO AN EDUCATION AT SCHOOL, IS INSCRIBED,

BY HIS AFFECTIONATE FRIEND,

WILLIAM COWPER.

Olney, Nov. 6, 1784.

TIROCINIUM.

It is not from his form, in which we trace
Strength join'd with beauty, dignity with grace,
That man, the master of this globe, derives
His right of empire over all that lives.
That form, indeed, the associate of a mind
Vast in its powers, ethereal in its kind,
That form, the labour of Almighty skill,
Framed for the service of a freeborn will,
Asserts precedence, and bespeaks control,
But borrows all its grandeur from the soul.
Her's is the state, the splendour, and the throne,
An intellectual kingdom, all her own.
For her the memory fills her ample page
With truths pour'd down from every distant age
For her amasses an unbounded store,
The wisdom of great nations, now no more;
Though laden, not encumber'd with her spoil,
Laborious, yet unconscious of her toil,
When copiously supplied, then most enlarged,
Still to be fed, and not to be surcharged.
For her the Fancy, roving unconfined,
The present muse of every pensive mind,

Works magic wonders, adds a brighter hue
To Nature's scenes than Nature ever knew.
At her command winds rise and waters roar,
Again she lays them slumbering on the shore;
With flower and fruit the wilderness supplies,
Or bids the rocks in ruder pomp arise.
For her the judgment, umpire in the strife
That Grace and Nature have to wage through life,
Quick-sighted arbiter of good and ill,
Appointed sage preceptor to the will,
Condemns, approves, and with a faithful voice
Guides the decision of a doubtful choice.

Why did the fiat of a God give birth
To yon fair Sun and his attendant earth?
And, when descending he resigns the skies,
Why takes the gentler moon her turn to rise,
Whom ocean feels through all his countless waves
And owns her power on every shore he laves?
Why do the seasons still enrich the year,
Fruitful and young as in their first career?
Spring hangs her infant blossoms on the trees,
Rock'd in the cradle of the western breeze;
Summer in haste the thriving charge receives
Beneath the shade of her expanded leaves,
Till autumn's fiercer heats and plenteous dews
Dye them at last in all their glowing hues.—
'Twere wild profusion all, and bootless waste,
Power misemploy'd, munificence misplaced,
Had not its Author dignified the plan,
And crown'd it with the majesty of man.

Thus form'd, thus placed, intelligent, and taught,
Look where he will, the wonders God has wrought,
The wildest scorner of his Maker's laws
Finds in a sober moment time to pause,
To press the important question on his heart,
"Why form'd at all, and wherefore as thou art?"
If man be what he seems, this hour a slave,
The next mere dust and ashes in the grave;
Endued with reason only to descry
His crimes and follies with an aching eye;
With passions, just that he may prove, with pain,
The force he spends against their fury vain;
And if, soon after having burnt, by turns,
With every lust with which frail Nature burns,
His being end where death dissolves the bond,
The tomb take all, and all be blank beyond;
Then he, of all that nature has brought forth,
Stands self-impeach'd the creature of least worth,
And, useless while he lives, and when he dies,
Brings into doubt the wisdom of the skies.

Truths that the learn'd pursue with eager thought
Are not important always as dear-bought,
Proving at last, though told in pompous strains,
A childish waste of philosophic pains;
But truths on which depends our main concern,
That 'tis our shame and misery not to learn,
Shine by the side of every path we tread
With such a lustre, he that runs may read.
'Tis true that, if to trifle life away
Down to the sunset of their latest day,

Then perish on futurity's wide shore
Like fleeting exhalations, found no more,
Were all that heaven required of humankind,
And all the plan their destiny design'd,
What none could reverence all might justly blame,
And man would breathe but for his Maker's shame.
But reason heard, and nature well perused,
At once the dreaming mind is disabused.
If all we find possessing earth, sea, air,
Reflect His attributes who placed them there,
Fulfil the purpose, and appear design'd
Proofs of the wisdom of the all-seeing mind;
'Tis plain the creature whom He chose to invest
With kingship and dominion o'er the rest,
Received his nobler nature, and was made
Fit for the power in which he stands array'd;
That first, or last, hereafter, if not here,
He too might make his author's wisdom clear,
Praise him on earth, or, obstinately dumb,
Suffer his justice in a world to come.
This once believed, 'twere logic misapplied
To prove a consequence by none denied,
That we are bound to cast the minds of youth
Betimes into the mould of heavenly truth,
That taught of God they may indeed be wise,
Nor ignorantly wandering miss the skies.

In early days the conscience has in most
A quickness, which in later life is lost:
Preserved from guilt by salutary fears,
Or, guilty, soon relenting into tears.

Too careless often, as our years proceed,
What friends we sort with, or what books we read,
Our parents yet exert a prudent care
To feed our infant minds with proper fare,
And wisely store the nursery by degrees
With wholesome learning, yet acquired with ease.
Neatly secured from being soil'd or torn
Beneath a pane of thin translucent horn,
A book (to please us at a tender age
'Tis call'd a book, though but a single page)
Presents the prayer the Saviour deign'd to teach,
Which children use, and parsons—when they
preach.
Lisping our syllables, we scramble next
Through moral narrative, or sacred text;
And learn with wonder how this world began,
Who made, who marr'd, and who has ransom'd
man.
P'oints, which, unless the Scripture made them
plain,
The wisest heads might agitate in vain.
Oh thou, whom, borne on fancy's eager wing
Back to the season of life's happy spring,
I pleased remember, and, while memory yet
Holds fast her office here, can ne'er forget;
Ingenious dreamer, in whose well-told tale
Sweet fiction and sweet truth alike prevail;
Whose humorous vein, strong sense, and simple
style,
May teach the gayest, make the gravest smile;

Witty, and well employ'd, and, like thy Lord,
Speaking in parables his slighted word;
I name thee not, lest so despised a name
Should move a sneer at thy deservèd fame;
Yet e'en in transitory life's late day,
That mingles all my brown with sober gray,
Revere the man whose Pilgrim marks the road,
And guides the Progress of the soul to God.
'Twere well with most, if books that could engage
Their childhood, pleased them at a riper age;
The man, approving what had charm'd the boy,
Would die at last in comfort, peace, and joy,
And not with curses on his heart, who stole
The gem of truth from his unguarded soul.
The stamp of artless piety impress'd
By kind tuition on his yielding breast,
The youth now bearded, and yet pert and raw,
Regards with scorn, though once received with awe;
And, warp't into the labyrinth of lies,
That babblers, call'd philosophers, devise,
Blasphemes his creed, as founded on a plan
Replete with dreams, unworthy of a man.
Touch but his nature in its ailing part,
Assert the native evil of his heart,
His pride resents the charge, although the proof
Rise in his forehead, and seem rank enough:
Point to the cure, describe a Saviour's cross
As God's expedient to retrievè his loss,

[1] See 2 Chron. xxvi. 19.

The young apostate sickens at the view,
And hates it with the malice of a Jew.
How weak the barrier of mere Nature proves,
Opposed against the pleasures Nature loves!
While self-betray'd, and wilfully undone,
She longs to yield, no sooner woo'd than won.
Try now the merits of this blest exchange
Of modest truth for wit's eccentric range.
Time was he closed as he began the day,
With decent duty, not ashamed to pray;
The practice was a bond upon his heart,
A pledge he gave for a consistent part;
Nor could he dare presumptuously displease
A power, confess'd so lately on his knees.
But now farewell all legendary tales,
The shadows fly, philosophy prevails;
Prayer to the winds, and caution to the waves;
Religion makes the free by nature slaves.
Priests have invented, and the world admired
What knavish priests promulgate as inspired;
Till Reason, now no longer overawed,
Resumes her powers, and spurns the clumsy fraud:
And, common sense diffusing real day,
The meteor of the Gospel dies away.
Such rhapsodies our shrewd discerning youth
Learn from expert inquirers after truth;
Whose only care, might truth presume to speak,
Is not to find what they profess to seek.
And thus, well tutor'd only while we share
A mother's lecture and a nurse's care;

And taught at schools much mythologic stuff,[1]
But sound religion sparingly enough;
Our early notices of truth, disgraced,
Soon lose their credit, and are all effaced.

Would you your son should be a sot or dunce,
Lascivious, headstrong, or all these at once;
That in good time the stripling's finish'd taste
For loose expense and fashionable waste
Should prove your ruin, and his own at last;
Train him in public with a mob of boys,
Childish in mischief only and in noise,
Else of a mannish growth, and five in ten
In infidelity and lewdness men.
There shall he learn, ere sixteen winters old,
That authors are most useful pawn'd or sold;
That pedantry is all that schools impart,
But taverns teach the knowledge of the heart;
There waiter Dick, with bacchanalian lays,
Shall win his heart, and have his drunken praise,
His counsellor and bosom friend shall prove,
And some street-pacing harlot his first love.
Schools, unless discipline were doubly strong,
Detain their adolescent charge too long;
The management of tyros of eighteen
Is difficult, their punishment obscene.

[1] The author begs leave to explain.—Sensible that, without such knowledge, neither the ancient poets nor historians can be tasted, or indeed understood, he does not mean to censure the pains that are taken to instruct a schoolboy in the religion of the heathen, but merely that neglect of christian culture which leaves him shamefully ignorant of his own.

The stout tall captain, whose superior size
The minor heroes view with envious eyes,
Becomes their pattern, upon whom they fix
Their whole attention, and ape all his tricks.
His pride, that scorns to obey or to submit,
With them is courage; his effrontery wit.
His wild excursions, window-breaking feats,
Robbery of gardens, quarrels in the streets,
His hairbreadth 'scapes, and all his daring schemes
Transport them, and are made their favourite themes.
In little bosoms such achievements strike
A kindred spark: they burn to do the like.
Thus, half accomplish'd ere he yet begin
To show the peeping down upon his chin;
And, as maturity of years comes on,
Made just the adept that you design'd your son:
To ensure the perseverance of his course,
And give your monstrous project all its force,
Send him to college. If he there be tamed,
Or in one article of vice reclaim'd,
Where no regard of ordinances is shown
Or look'd for now, the fault must be his own.
Some sneaking virtue lurks in him, no doubt,
Where neither strumpet's charms, nor drinking bout,
Nor gambling practices can find it out.
Such youths of spirit, and that spirit too,
Ye nurseries of our boys, we owe to you:
Though from ourselves the mischief more proceeds,
For public schools 'tis public folly feeds.

The slaves of custom and establish'd mode,
With packhorse constancy we keep the road,
Crooked or straight, through quags or thorny dells,
True to the jingling of our leader's bells.
To follow foolish precedents, and wink
With both our eyes, is easier than to think:
And such an age as ours balks no expense,
Except of caution and of common sense;
Else sure notorious fact, and proof so plain,
Would turn our steps into a wiser train.
I blame not those who, with what care they can,
O'erwatch the numerous and unruly clan;
Or, if I blame, 'tis only that they dare
Promise a work of which they must despair.
Have ye, ye sage intendants of the whole,
A ubiquarian presence and control,
Elisha's eye, that, when Gehazi stray'd,
Went with him, and saw all the game he play'd?
Yes—ye are conscious; and on all the shelves
Your pupils strike upon have struck yourselves.
Or if, by nature sober, ye had then,
Boys as ye were, the gravity of men,
Ye knew at least, by constant proofs address'd
To ears and eyes, the vices of the rest.
But ye connive at what ye cannot cure,
And evils not to be endured endure,
Lest power exerted, but without success,
Should make the little ye retain still less.
Ye once were justly famed for bringing forth
Undoubted scholarship and genuine worth;

And in the firmament of fame still shines
A glory, bright as that of all the signs,
Of poets raised by you, and statesmen, and divines.
Peace to them all! those brilliant times are fled,
And no such lights are kindling in their stead.
Our striplings shine indeed, but with such rays
As set the midnight riot in a blaze;
And seem, if judged by their expressive looks,
Deeper in none than in their surgeon's books.
Say, Muse (for education made the song,
No Muse can hesitate, or linger long),
What causes move us, knowing, as we must,
That these ménageries all fail their trust,
To send our sons to scout and scamper there,
While colts and puppies cost us so much care?
Be it a weakness, it deserves some praise,
We love the playplace of our early days;
The scene is touching, and the heart is stone
That feels not at that sight, and feels at none.
The wall on which we tried our graving skill,
The very name we carved subsisting still;
The bench on which we sat while deep employ'd.
Though mangled, hack'd, and hew'd, not yet destroy'd;
The little ones, unbutton'd, glowing hot,
Playing our games, and on the very spot;
As happy as we once to kneel and draw
The chalky ring, and knuckle down at taw;
To pitch the ball into the grounded hat,
Or drive it devious with a dexterous pat;

The pleasing spectacle at once excites
Such recollection of our own delights,
That, viewing it, we seem almost to obtain
Our innocent sweet simple years again.
This fond attachment to the well known place,
Whence first we started into life's long race,
Maintains its hold with such unfailing sway,
We feel it e'en in age, and at our latest day.
Hark! how the sire of chits, whose future share
Of classic food begins to be his care,
With his own likeness placed on either knee,
Indulges all a father's heartfelt glee;
And tells them, as he strokes their silver locks,
That they must soon learn Latin, and to box;
Then turning, he regales his listening wife
With all the adventures of his early life;
His skill in coachmanship, or driving chaise,
In bilking tavern bills, and spouting plays;
What shifts he used, detected in a scrape,
How he was flogg'd, or had the luck to escape;
What sums he lost at play, and how he sold
Watch, seals, and all—till all his pranks are told
Retracing thus his frolics ('tis a name
That palliates deeds of folly and of shame),
He gives the local bias all its sway;
Resolves that where he play'd his sons shall play,
And destines their bright genius to be shown
Just in the scene where he display'd his own.
The meek and bashful boy will soon be taught
To be as bold and forward as he ought;

The rude will scuffle through with ease enough,
Great schools suit best the sturdy and the rough.
Ah, happy designation, prudent choice,
The event is sure; expect it, and rejoice!
Soon see your wish fulfill'd in either child,
The pert made perter, and the tame made wild.
The great indeed, by titles, riches, birth,
Excused the incumbrance of more solid worth,
Are best disposed of where with most success
They may acquire that confident address,
Those habits of profuse and lewd expense,
That scorn of all delights but those of sense,
Which, though in plain plebeians we condemn,
With so much reason all expect from them.
But families of less illustrious fame,
Whose chief distinction is their spotless name,
Whose heirs, their honours none, their income small,
Must shine by true desert, or not at all,
What dream they of, that, with so little care
They risk their hopes, their dearest treasure, there?
They dream of little Charles or William graced
With wig prolix, down flowing to his waist;
They see the attentive crowds his talents draw,
They hear him speak—the oracle of law.
The father, who designs his babe a priest,
Dreams him episcopally such at least;
And, while the playful jockey scours the room
Briskly, astride upon the parlour broom,
In fancy sees him more superbly ride
In coach with purple lined, and mitres on its side.

Events improbable and strange as these,
Which only a parental eye foresees,
A public school shall bring to pass with ease.
But how? resides such virtue in that air,
As must create an appetite for prayer?
And will it breathe into him all the zeal
That candidates for such a prize should feel,
To take the lead and be the foremost still
In all true worth and literary skill?
"Ah, blind to bright futurity, untaught
The knowledge of the world, and dull of thought!
Church ladders are not always mounted best
By learnèd clerks, and Latinists profess'd.
The exalted prize demands an upward look,
Not to be found by poring on a book.
Small skill in Latin, and still less in Greek,
Is more than adequate to all I seek.
Let erudition grace him, or not grace,
I give the bauble but the second place;
His wealth, fame, honours, all that I intend,
Subsist and centre in one point—a friend.
A friend, whate'er he studies or neglects,
Shall give him consequence, heal all defects.
His intercourse with peers and sons of peers—
There dawns the splendour of his future years:
In that bright quarter his propitious skies
Shall blush betimes, and there his glory rise.
Your Lordship, and Your Grace! what school can teach
A rhetoric equal to those parts of speech?

What need of Homer's verse, or Tully's prose,
Sweet interjections! if he learn but those?
Let reverend churls his ignorance rebuke,
Who starve upon a dog's-ear'd Pentateuch,
The parson knows enough who knows a duke."
Egregious purpose! worthily begun
In barbarous prostitution of your son;
Press'd on his part by means that would disgrace
A scrivener's clerk, or footman out of place,
And ending, if at last its end be gain'd,
In sacrilege, in God's own house profaned.
It may succeed; and, if his sins should call
For more than common punishment, it shall;
The wretch shall rise, and be the thing on earth
Least qualified in honour, learning, worth,
To occupy a sacred, awful post,
In which the best and worthiest tremble most.
The royal letters are a thing of course,
A king, that would, might recommend his horse;
And deans, no doubt, and chapters, with one voice,
As bound in duty, would confirm the choice.
Behold your bishop! well he plays his part,
Christian in name, and infidel in heart,
Ghostly in office, earthly in his plan,
A slave at court, elsewhere a lady's man.
Dumb as a senator, and as a priest
A piece of mere church furniture at best;
To live estranged from God his total scope,
And his end sure, without one glimpse of hope.
But, fair although and feasible it seem,

Depend not much upon your golden dream;
For Providence, that seems concern'd to exempt
The hallow'd bench from absolute contempt,
In spite of all the wrigglers into place,
Still keeps a seat or two for worth and grace;
And therefore 'tis, that, though the sight be rare,
We sometimes see a Lowth or Bagot there.
Besides, school friendships are not always found,
Though fair in promise, permanent and sound:
The most disinterested and virtuous minds,
In early years connected, time unbinds;
New situations give a different cast
Of habit, inclination, temper, taste;
And he, that seem'd our counterpart at first,
Soon shows the strong similitude reversed.
Young heads are giddy, and young hearts are warm,
And make mistakes for manhood to reform.
Boys are, at best, but pretty buds unblown,
Whose scent and hues are rather guess'd than known;
Each dreams that each is just what he appears,
But learns his error in maturer years,
When disposition, like a sail unfurl'd,
Shows all its rents and patches to the world.
If, therefore, e'en when honest in design,
A boyish friendship may so soon decline,
'Twere wiser sure to inspire a little heart
With just abhorrence of so mean a part,
Than set your son to work at a vile trade
For wages so unlikely to be paid.

Our public hives of puerile resort,
That are of chief and most approved report,
To such base hopes, in many a sordid soul,
Owe their repute in part, but not the whole.
A principle, whose proud pretensions pass
Unquestion'd, though the jewel be but glass—
That with a world, not often over-nice,
Ranks as a virtue, and is yet a vice;
Or rather a gross compound, justly tried,
Of envy, hatred, jealousy, and pride—
Contributes most perhaps to enhance their fame;
And emulation is its specious name.
Boys, once on fire with that contentious zeal,
Feel all the rage that female rivals feel;
The prize of beauty in a woman's eyes
Not brighter than in theirs the scholar's prize.
The spirit of that competition burns
With all varieties of ill by turns;
Each vainly magnifies his own success,
Resents his fellow's, wishes it were less,
Exults in his miscarriage if he fail,
Deems his reward too great if he prevail,
And labours to surpass him day and night,
Less for improvement than to tickle spite.
The spur is powerful, and I grant its force;
It pricks the genius forward in its course,
Allows short time for play, and none for sloth;
And, felt alike by each, advances both:
But judge, where so much evil intervenes,
The end, though plausible, not worth the means.
Weigh, for a moment, classical desert

Against a heart depraved and temper hurt;
Hurt too perhaps for life; for early wrong
Done to the nobler part affects it long;
And you are staunch indeed in learning's cause,
If you can crown a discipline, that draws
Such mischiefs after it, with much applause.
Connexion form'd for interest, and endear'd
By selfish views, thus censured and cashier'd;
And emulation, as engendering hate,
Doom'd to a no less ignominious fate:
The props of such proud seminaries fall,
The Jachin and the Boaz of them all.
Great schools rejected then, as those that swell
Beyond a size that can be managed well,
Shall royal institutions miss the bays,
And small academies win all the praise?
Force not my drift beyond its just intent,
I praise a school as Pope a government;
So take my judgment in his language dress'd,
"Whate'er is best administer'd is best."
Few boys are born with talents that excel,
But all are capable of living well;
Then ask not, whether limited or large?
But, watch they strictly, or neglect their charge?
If anxious only that their boys may learn,
While morals languish, a despised concern,
The great and small deserve one common blame,
Different in size, but in effect the same.
Much zeal in virtue's cause all teachers boast,
Though motives of mere lucre sway the most;
Therefore in towns and cities they abound,

For there the game they seek is easiest found;
Though there, in spite of all that care can do,
Traps to catch youth are most abundant too.
If shrewd, and of a well-constructed brain,
Keen in pursuit, and vigorous to retain,
Your son come forth a prodigy of skill;
As, wheresoever taught, so form'd, he will;
The pedagogue, with self-complacent air,
Claims more than half the praise as his due share.
But if, with all his genius, he betray,
Not more intelligent than loose and gay,
Such vicious habits as disgrace his name,
Threaten his health, his fortune, and his fame;
Though want of due restraint alone have bred
The symptoms that you see with so much dread;
Unenvied there, he may sustain alone
The whole reproach, the fault was all his own.
Oh 'tis a sight to be with joy perused,
By all whom sentiment has not abused;
New-fangled sentiment, the boasted grace
Of those who never feel in the right place;
A sight surpass'd by none that we can show,
Though Vestris on one leg still shine below;
A father blest with an ingenuous son,
Father, and friend, and tutor, all in one.
How!—turn again to tales long since forgot,
Æsop, and Phædrus, and the rest?—Why not?
He will not blush, that has a father's heart,
To take in childish plays a childish part;
But bends his sturdy back to any toy
That youth takes pleasure in, to please his boy;

Then why resign into a stranger's hand
A task as much within your own command,
That God and nature, and your interest too,
Seem with one voice to delegate to you?
Why hire a lodging in a house unknown
For one whose tenderest thoughts all hover round
your own?
This second weaning, needless as it is,
How does it lacerate both your heart and his!
The indented stick, that loses day by day
Notch after notch till all are smooth'd away,
Bears witness, long ere his dismission come,
With what intense desire he wants his home.
But though the joys he hopes beneath your roof
Bid fair enough to answer in the proof,
Harmless, and safe, and natural, as they are,
A disappointment waits him even there:
Arrived, he feels an unexpected change;
He blushes, hangs his head, is shy and strange,
No longer takes, as once, with fearless ease,
His favourite stand between his father's knees,
But seeks the corner of some distant seat,
And eyes the door, and watches a retreat,
And, least familiar where he should be most,
Feels all his happiest privileges lost.
Alas, poor boy!—the natural effect
Of love by absence chill'd into respect.
Say, what accomplishments, at school acquired,
Brings he, to sweeten fruits so undesired?
Thou well deservest an alienated son,
Unless thy conscious heart acknowledge—none;

None that, in thy domestic snug recess,
He had not made his own with more address,
Though some, perhaps, that shock thy feeling
mind,
And better never learn'd, or left behind.
Add too, that thus estranged, thou canst obtain
By no kind arts his confidence again;
That here begins with most that long complaint
Of filial frankness lost, and love grown faint,
Which, oft neglected, in life's waning years
A parent pours into regardless ears.
Like caterpillars, dangling under trees
By slender threads, and swinging in the breeze,
Which filthily bewray and sore disgrace
The boughs in which are bred the unseemly race;
While every worm industriously weaves
And winds his web about the rivelled leaves;
So numerous are the follies that annoy
The mind and heart of every sprightly boy;
Imaginations noxious and perverse,
Which admonition can alone disperse.
The encroaching nuisance asks a faithful hand,
Patient, affectionate, of high command,
To check the procreation of a breed
Sure to exhaust the plant on which they feed.
'Tis not enough that Greek or Roman page,
At stated hours, his freakish thoughts engage;
E'en in his pastimes he requires a friend
To warn, and teach him safely to unbend;
O'er all his pleasures gently to preside,
Watch his emotions, and control their tide,

And levying thus, and with an easy sway,
A tax of profit from his very play,
To impress a value, not to be erased,
On moments squander'd else, and running all to waste.
And seems it nothing in a father's eye
That unimproved those many moments fly?
And is he well content his son should find
No nourishment to feed his growing mind,
But conjugated verbs and nouns declined?
For such is all the mental food purvey'd
By public hackneys in the schooling trade:
Who feed a pupil's intellect with store
Of syntax, truly, but with little more;
Dismiss their cares when they dismiss their flock,
Machines themselves, and govern'd by a clock.
Perhaps a father, blest with any brains,
Would deem it no abuse, or waste of pains,
To improve this diet, at no great expense,
With savoury truth and wholesome common sense;
To lead his son, for prospects of delight,
To some not steep, though philosophic, height,
Thence to exhibit to his wondering eyes
Yon circling worlds, their distance, and their size,
The moons of Jove, and Saturn's belted ball,
And the harmonious order of them all;
To show him in an insect or a flower
Such microscopic proof of skill and power,
As, hid from ages past, God now displays
To combat atheists with in modern days;

To spread the earth before him, and commend,
With designation of the finger's end,
Its various parts to his attentive note,
Thus bringing home to him the most remote;
To teach his heart to glow with generous flame,
Caught from the deeds of men of ancient fame;
And, more than all, with commendation due,
To set some living worthy in his view,
Whose fair example may at once inspire
A wish to copy what he must admire.
Such knowledge, gain'd betimes, and which appears,
Though solid, not too weighty for his years,
Sweet in itself, and not forbidding sport,
When health demands it, of athletic sort,
Would make him—what some lovely boys have been,
And more than one perhaps that I have seen—
An evidence and reprehension both
Of the mere schoolboy's lean and tardy growth.
Art thou a man professionally tied,
With all thy faculties elsewhere applied,
Too busy to intend a meaner care
Than how to enrich thyself, and next thine heir;
Or art thou (as, though rich, perhaps thou art)
But poor in knowledge, having none to impart:—
Behold that figure, neat, though plainly clad;
His sprightly mingled with a shade of sad;
Not of a nimble tongue, though now and then
Heard to articulate like other men;

No jester, and yet lively in discourse,
His phrase well chosen, clear, and full of force;
And his address, if not quite French in ease,
Not English stiff, but frank, and form'd to please
Low in the world, because he scorns its arts;
A man of letters, manners, morals, parts;
Unpatronized, and therefore little known;
Wise for himself and his few friends alone—
In him thy well appointed proxy see,
Arm'd for a work too difficult for thee;
Prepared by taste, by learning, and true worth,
To form thy son, to strike his genius forth;
Beneath thy roof, beneath thine eye, to prove
The force of discipline when back'd by love;
To double all thy pleasure in thy child,
His mind inform'd, his morals undefiled.
Safe under such a wing, the boy shall show
No spots contracted among grooms below,
Nor taint his speech with meannesses, design'd
By footman Tom for witty and refined.
There, in his commerce with the liveried herd,
Lurks the contagion chiefly to be fear'd;
For since (so fashion dictates) all, who claim
A higher than a mere plebeian fame,
Find it expedient, come what mischief may,
To entertain a thief or two in pay,
(And they that can afford the expense of more,
Some half a dozen, and some half a score),
Great cause occurs to save him from a band
So sure to spoil him, and so near at hand;

A point secured, if once he be supplied
With some such Mentor always at his side.
Are such men rare? perhaps they would abound
Were occupation easier to be found,
Were education, else so sure to fail,
Conducted on a manageable scale,
And schools, that have outlived all just esteem,
Exchanged for the secure domestic scheme.—
But, having found him, be thou duke or earl,
Show thou hast sense enough to prize the pearl,
And, as thou wouldst the advancement of thine
In all good faculties beneath his care, [heir
Respect, as is but rational and just,
A man deem'd worthy of so dear a trust.
Despised by thee, what more can he expect
From youthful folly than the same neglect?
A flat and fatal negative obtains
That instant upon all his future pains;
His lessons tire, his mild rebukes offend,
And all the instructions of thy son's best friend
Are a stream choked, or trickling to no end.
Doom him not then to solitary meals;
But recollect that he has sense, and feels;
And that, possessor of a soul refined,
An upright heart, and cultivated mind,
His post not mean, his talents not unknown,
He deems it hard to vegetate alone.
And, if admitted at thy board he sit,
Account him no just mark for idle wit;
Offend not him, whom modesty restrains
From repartee, with jokes that he disdains;

Much less transfix his feelings with an oath;
Nor frown, unless he vanish with the cloth.—
And, trust me, his utility may reach
To more than he is hired or bound to teach;
Much trash unutter'd, and some ills undone,
Through reverence of the censor of thy son.
  But, if thy table be indeed unclean,
Foul with excess, and with discourse obscene,
And thou a wretch, whom, following her old plan,
The world accounts an honourable man,
Because forsooth thy courage has been tried
And stood the test, perhaps on the wrong side;
Though thou hadst never grace enough to prove
That any thing but vice could win thy love;—
Or hast thou a polite, card-playing wife,
Chain'd to the routs that she frequents for life;
Who, just when industry begins to snore, [door;
Flies, wing'd with joy, to some coach-crowded
And thrice in every winter throngs thine own
With half the chariots and sedans in town.
Thyself meanwhile e'en shifting as thou mayst:
Not very sober though, nor very chaste;—
Or is thine house, though less superb thy rank,
If not a scene of pleasure, a mere blank,
And thou at best, and in thy soberest mood,
A trifler vain, and empty of all good;
Though mercy for thyself thou canst have none,
Hear Nature plead, show mercy to thy son,
Saved from his home, where every day brings
Some mischief fatal to his future worth, [forth

Find him a better in a distant spot,
Within some pious pastor's humble cot,
Where vile example (yours I chiefly mean,
The most seducing, and the oftenest seen)
May never more be stamp'd upon his breast,
Not yet perhaps incurably impress'd.
Where early rest makes early rising sure,
Disease or comes not, or finds easy cure,
Prevented much by diet neat and plain;
Or, if it enter, soon starved out again:
Where all the attention of his faithful host,
Discreetly limited to two at most,
May raise such fruits as shall reward his care,
And not at last evaporate in air:
Where, stillness aiding study, and his mind
Serene, and to his duties much inclined,
Not occupied in day dreams, as at home,
Of pleasures past, or follies yet to come,
His virtuous toil may terminate at last
In settled habit and decided taste.—
But whom do I advise? the fashion-led,
The incorrigibly wrong, the deaf, the dead!
Whom care and cool deliberation suit
Not better much than spectacles a brute;
Who, if their sons some slight tuition share,
Deem it of no great moment whose, or where;
Too proud to adopt the thoughts of one unknown,
And much too gay to have any of their own.
But courage, man! methought the Muse replied,
Mankind are various, and the world is wide:

The ostrich, silliest of the feather'd kind,
And form'd of God without a parent's mind,
Commits her eggs, incautious, to the dust,
Forgetful that the foot may crush the trust;
And, while on public nurseries they rely,
Not knowing, and too oft not caring, why,
Irrational in what they thus prefer,
No few, that would seem wise, resemble her.
But all are not alike. Thy warning voice
May here and there prevent erroneous choice;
And some perhaps, who, busy as they are,
Yet make their progeny their dearest care
(Whose hearts will ache, once told what ills may reach
Their offspring, left upon so wild a beach),
Will need no stress of argument to enforce
The expedience of a less adventurous course;
The rest will slight thy counsel, or condemn;
But they have human feelings—turn to them.

To you, then, tenants of life's middle state,
Securely placed between the small and great,
Whose character, yet undebauch'd, retains
Two thirds of all the virtue that remains,
Who, wise yourselves, desire your sons should learn
Your wisdom and your ways—to you I turn.
Look round you on a world perversely blind;
See what contempt is fallen on humankind;
See wealth abused, and dignities misplaced,
Great titles, offices, and trusts disgraced,
Long lines of ancestry, renown'd of old,
Their noble qualities all quench'd and cold;

See Bedlam's closeted and handcuff'd charge
Surpass'd in frenzy by the mad at large;
See great commanders making war a trade,
Great lawyers, lawyers without study made;
Churchmen, in whose esteem their best employ
Is odious, and their wages all their joy,
Who, far enough from furnishing their shelves
With Gospel lore, turn infidels themselves;
See womanhood despised, and manhood shamed
With infamy too nauseous to be named,
Fops at all corners, ladylike in mien,
Civeted fellows, smelt ere they are seen,
Else coarse and rude in manners, and their tongue
On fire with curses, and with nonsense hung,
Now flush'd with drunkenness, now with whoredom pale,
Their breath a sample of last night's regale;
See volunteers in all the vilest arts,
Men well endow'd, of honourable parts,
Design'd by Nature wise, but self-made fools;
All these, and more like these, were bred at schools.
And if it chance, as sometimes chance it will,
That though school-bred the boy be virtuous still;
Such rare exceptions, shining in the dark,
Prove, rather than impeach, the just remark:
As here and there a twinkling star descried
Serves but to show how black is all beside.
Now look on him, whose very voice in tone
Just echoes thine, whose features are thine own,
And stroke his polish'd cheek of purest red,
And lay thine hand upon his flaxen head,

And say, My boy, the unwelcome hour is come,
When thou, transplanted from thy genial home,
Must find a colder soil and bleaker air,
And trust for safety to a stranger's care.
What character, what turn thou wilt assume
From constant converse with I know not whom;
Who there will court thy friendship, with what views,
And, artless as thou art, whom thou wilt choose;
Though much depends on what thy choice shall be,
Is all chance-medley, and unknown to me.
Canst thou, the tear just trembling on thy lids,
And while the dreadful risk foreseen forbids;
Free too, and under no constraining force,
Unless the sway of custom warp thy course;
Lay such a stake upon the losing side,
Merely to gratify so blind a guide?
Thou canst not! Nature, pulling at thine heart,
Condemns the unfatherly, the imprudent part.
Thou wouldst not, deaf to Nature's tenderest plea,
Turn him adrift upon a rolling sea,
Nor say, Go thither, conscious that there lay
A brood of asps, or quicksands, in his way;
Then, only govern'd by the selfsame rule
Of natural pity, send him not to school.
No—guard him better. Is he not thine own,
Thyself in miniature, thy flesh, thy bone?
And hopest thou not ('tis every father's hope)
That, since thy strength must with thy years elope,
And thou wilt need some comfort to assuage
Health's last farewell, a staff of thine old age,

That then, in recompense of all thy cares,
Thy child shall show respect to thy gray hairs,
Befriend thee, of all other friends bereft,
And give thy life its only cordial left?
Aware then how much danger intervenes,
To compass that good end, forecast the means.
His heart, now passive, yields to thy command;
Secure it thine, its key is in thine hand.
If thou desert thy charge, and throw it wide,
Nor heed what guests there enter and abide,
Complain not if attachments lewd and base
Supplant thee in it, and usurp thy place.
But, if thou guard its sacred chambers sure
From vicious inmates and delights impure,
Either his gratitude shall hold him fast,
And keep him warm and filial to the last;
Or, if he prove unkind (as who can say
But, being man, and therefore frail, he may?)
One comfort yet shall cheer thine aged heart,
Howe'er he slight thee, thou hast done thy part.
Oh, barbarous! wouldst thou with a Gothic hand
Pull down the schools—what!—all the schools in the land;
Or throw them up to livery-nags and grooms,
Or turn them into shops and auction rooms?
A captious question, sir (and yours is one),
Deserves an answer similar, or none.
Wouldst thou, possessor of a flock, employ
(Apprised that he is such) a careless boy,
And feed him well, and give him handsome pay,
Merely to sleep, and let them run astray?

Survey our schools and colleges, and see
A sight not much unlike my simile.
From education, as the leading cause,
The public character its colour draws;
Thence the prevailing manners take their cast,
Extravagant or sober, loose or chaste.
And, though I would not advertise them yet,
Nor write on each—This building to be let,
Unless the world were all prepared to embrace
A plan well worthy to supply their place;
Yet, backward as they are, and long have been,
To cultivate and keep the morals clean
(Forgive the crime), I wish them, I confess,
Or better managed, or encouraged less.

HYMNS.

I. WALKING WITH GOD. *Gen.* v. 24.

Oh! for a closer walk with God,
A calm and heavenly frame;
A light to shine upon the road
That leads me to the Lamb!

Where is the blessedness I knew
When first I saw the Lord?
Where is the soul-refreshing view
Of Jesus and his word?

What peaceful hours I once enjoy'd!
How sweet their memory still!
But they have left an aching void,
The world can never fill.

Return, O holy Dove, return!
Sweet messenger of rest:
I hate the sins that made thee mourn,
And drove thee from my breast.

The dearest idol I have known,
Whate'er that idol be,
Help me to tear it from thy throne,
And worship only thee.

So shall my walk be close with God,
Calm and serene my frame;
So purer light shall mark the road
That leads me to the Lamb.

II. JEHOVAH-JIREH. THE LORD WILL PROVIDE.

Gen. xxii. 14.

THE saints should never be dismay'd,
Nor sink in hopeless fear;
For when they least expect his aid,
The Saviour will appear.

This Abraham found: he raised the knife;
God saw, and said, "Forbear!
Yon ram shall yield his meaner life;
Behold the victim there."

Once David seem'd Saul's certain prey;
But hark! the foe's at hand;[1]
Saul turns his arms another way,
To save the invaded land.

When Jonah sunk beneath the wave,
He thought to rise no more;[2]
But God prepared a fish to save,
And bear him to the shore.

Blest proofs of power and grace divine,
That meet us in his word!
May every deep-felt care of mine
Be trusted with the Lord.

[1] 1 Sam. xxiii. 27. [2] Jonah i. 17.

Wait for his seasonable aid,
And though it tarry, wait:
The promise may be long delay'd,
But cannot come too late.

III. JEHOVAH-ROPHI. I AM THE LORD THAT HEALETH THEE. *Exod.* xv. 26.

HEAL us, Emmanuel, here we are,
Waiting to feel thy touch:
Deep-wounded souls to thee repair,
And, Saviour, we are such.

Our faith is feeble, we confess,
We faintly trust thy word;
But wilt thou pity us the less?
Be that far from thee, Lord!

Remember him who once applied,
With trembling, for relief;
"Lord, I believe," with tears he cried,[1]
"Oh, help my unbelief!"

She too, who touch'd thee in the press,
And healing virtue stole,
Was answer'd, "Daughter, go in peace,[2]
Thy faith hath made thee whole."

Conceal'd amid the gathering throng,
She would have shunn'd thy view;
And if her faith was firm and strong,
Had strong misgivings too.

[1] Mark ix. 24. [2] Mark v. 34.

Like her, with hopes and fears we come,
To touch thee, if we may;
Oh! send us not despairing home,
Send none unheal'd away.

IV. JEHOVAH-NISSI. THE LORD MY BANNER

Exod. xvii. 15.

By whom was David taught
To aim the deadly blow,
When he Goliath fought,
And laid the Gittite low?
Nor sword nor spear the stripling took,
But chose a pebble from the brook.

'Twas Israel's God and king
Who sent him to the fight;
Who gave him strength to sling,
And skill to aim aright.
Ye feeble saints, your strength endures,
Because young David's God is yours.

Who order'd Gideon forth,
To storm the invaders' camp,
With arms of little worth,
A pitcher and a lamp?[1]
The trumpets made his coming known,
And all the host was overthrown.

[1] Judges vii. 9, and 20.

Oh! I have seen the day,
When with a single word,
God helping me to say,
My trust is in the Lord,
My soul hath quell'd a thousand foes,
Fearless of all that could oppose.

But unbelief, self-will,
Self-righteousness, and pride,
How often do they steal
My weapon from my side!
Yet David's Lord, and Gideon's friend,
Will help his servant to the end.

F. JEHOVAH-SHALOM. THE LORD SEND PEACE.

Judges vi. 24.

JESUS, whose blood so freely stream'd
To satisfy the law's demand;
By thee from guilt and wrath redeem'd,
Before the Father's face I stand.

To reconcile offending man,
Make Justice drop her angry rod;
What creature could have form'd the plan,
Or who fulfil it but a God?

No drop remains of all the curse,
For wretches who deserved the whole;
No arrows dipt in wrath to pierce
The guilty, but returning soul.

Peace by such means so dearly bought,
What rebel could have hoped to see?
Peace, by his injured Sovereign wrought,
His Sovereign fasten'd to a tree.

Now, Lord, thy feeble worm prepare!
For strife with earth and hell begins;
Confirm and gird me for the war,
They hate the soul that hates his sins.

Let them in horrid league agree!
They may assault, they may distress;
But cannot quench thy love to me,
Nor rob me of the Lord my peace.

VI. WISDOM. *Prov.* viii. 22—31.

Ere God had built the mountains,
Or raised the fruitful hills;
Before he fill'd the fountains
That feed the running rills;
In me, from everlasting,
The wonderful I Am,
Found pleasures never wasting,
And Wisdom is my name.

When, like a tent to dwell in,
He spread the skies abroad,
And swathed about the swelling
Of Ocean's mighty flood;

He wrought by weight and measure,
And I was with him then:
Myself the Father's pleasure,
And mine, the sons of men.

Thus wisdom's words discover
Thy glory and thy grace,
Thou everlasting lover
Of our unworthy race!
Thy gracious eye survey'd us
Ere stars were seen above;
In wisdom thou hast made us,
And died for us in love.

And couldst thou be delighted
With creatures such as we,
Who, when we saw thee, slighted,
And nail'd thee to a tree?
Unfathomable wonder,
And mystery divine!
The voice that speaks in thunder,
Says, "Sinner, I am thine!"

VII. VANITY OF THE WORLD.

God gives his mercies to be spent;
Your hoard will do your soul no good;
Gold is a blessing only lent,
Repaid by giving others food.

The world's esteem is but a bribe,
To buy their peace you sell your own;
The slave of a vainglorious tribe,
Who hate you while they make you known.

The joy that vain amusements give,
Oh! sad conclusion that it brings!
The honey of a crowded hive,
Defended by a thousand stings.

'Tis thus the world rewards the fools
That live upon her treacherous smiles:
She leads them blindfold by her rules,
And ruins all whom she beguiles.

God knows the thousands who go down
From pleasure into endless woe;
And with a long despairing groan
Blaspheme their Maker as they go.

O fearful thought! be timely wise;
Delight but in a Saviour's charms.
And God shall take you to the skies,
Embraced in everlasting arms.

VIII. O LORD, I WILL PRAISE THEE. *Isaiah* xii. 1

I WILL praise thee every day
Now thine anger's turn'd away!
Comfortable thoughts arise
From the bleeding sacrifice.

Here, in the fair gospel-field,
Wells of free salvation yield
Streams of life, a plenteous store,
And my soul shall thirst no more.

Jesus is become at length
My salvation and my strength;
And his praises shall prolong,
While I live, my pleasant song.

Praise ye, then, his glorious name,
Publish his exalted fame!
Still his worth your praise exceeds,
Excellent are all his deeds.

Raise again the joyful sound,
Let the nations roll it round!
Zion, shout, for this is he,
God the Saviour dwells in thee!

IX. THE CONTRITE HEART. *Isaiah* lvii. 15.

The Lord will happiness divine
On contrite hearts bestow;
Then tell me, gracious God, is mine
A contrite heart or no?

I hear, but seem to hear in vain,
Insensible as steel;
If aught is felt, 'tis only pain,
To find I cannot feel.

I sometimes think myself inclined
To love thee, if I could;
But often feel another mind,
Averse to all that's good.

My best desires are faint and few,
I fain would strive for more;
But when I cry, "My strength renew,"
Seem weaker than before.

Thy saints are comforted, I know,
And love thy house of prayer;
I therefore go where others go,
But find no comfort there.

O make this heart rejoice or ache;
Decide this doubt for me;
And if it be not broken, break,
And heal it if it be.

X THE FUTURE PEACE AND GLORY OF THE CHURCH
Isaiah ix. 15—20.

Hear what God the Lord hath spoken,
"O my people, faint and few,
Comfortless, afflicted, broken,
Fair abodes I build for you;
Thorns of heart-felt tribulation
Shall no more perplex your ways:
You shall name your walls, Salvation,
And your gates shall all be praise.

"There, like streams that feed the garden,
Pleasures without end shall flow;
For the Lord, your faith rewarding,
All his bounty shall bestow;
Still in undisturb'd possession
Peace and righteousness shall reign;
Never shall you feel oppression,
Hear the voice of war again.

"Ye no more your suns descending,
Waning moons no more shall see;
But, your griefs for ever ending,
Find eternal noon in me:
God shall rise, and shining o'er ye,
Change to day the gloom of night;
He, the Lord, shall be your glory,
God your everlasting light."

XI. JEHOVAH OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. *Jer.* xxiii. 6

My God, how perfect are thy ways
But mine polluted are;
Sin twines itself about my praise,
And slides into my prayer.

When I would speak what thou hast done
To save me from my sin,
I cannot make thy mercies known,
But self-applause creeps in.

Divine desire, that holy flame
Thy grace creates in me;
Alas! impatience is its name,
When it returns to thee.

This heart, a fountain of vile thoughts,
How does it overflow!
While self upon the surface floats,
Still bubbling from below.

Let others in the gaudy dress
Of fancied merit shine,
The Lord shall be my righteousness,
The Lord for ever mine.

XII. EPHRAIM REPENTING. *Jer.* xxxi. 18—20.

My God, till I received thy stroke,
How like a beast was I!
So unaccustom'd to the yoke,
So backward to comply.

With grief my just reproach I bear,
Shame fills me at the thought;
How frequent my rebellions were!
What wickedness I wrought!

Thy merciful restraint I scorn'd,
And left the pleasant road;
Yet turn me, and I shall be turn'd,
Thou art the Lord my God.

"Is Ephraim banish'd from my thoughts,
Or vile in my esteem?
No," saith the Lord, "with all his faults,
I still remember him.

"Is he a dear and pleasant child?
Yes, dear and pleasant still;
Though sin his foolish heart beguiled,
And he withstood my will.

"My sharp rebuke has laid him low,
He seeks my face again;
My pity kindles at his woe,
He shall not seek in vain."

XIII. THE COVENANT. *Ezek.* xxxvi. 25—28.

The Lord proclaims his grace abroad!
Behold, I change your hearts of stone;
Each shall renounce his idol-god,
And serve, henceforth, the Lord alone.

My grace, a flowing stream, proceeds
To wash your filthiness away;
Ye shall abhor your former deeds,
And learn my statutes to obey.

My truth the great design ensures,
I give myself away to you;
You shall be mine, I will be yours,
Your God unalterably true.

Yet not unsought, or unimplored,
The plenteous grace shall I confer;[1]
No—your whole hearts shall seek the Lord,
I'll put a praying spirit there.

From the first breath of life divine,
Down to the last expiring hour,
The gracious work shall all be mine,
Begun and ended in my power.

XIV. JEHOVAH-SHAMMAH. *Ezek.* xlviii. 35.

As birds their infant brood protect,[2]
And spread their wings to shelter them,
Thus saith the Lord to his elect,
"So will I guard Jerusalem."

And what then is Jerusalem,
This darling object of his care?
Where is its worth in God's esteem?
Who built it? who inhabits there?

Jehovah founded it in blood,
The blood of his incarnate Son;
There dwell the saints, once foes to God,
The sinners whom he calls his own.

There, though besieged on every side,
Yet much beloved and guarded well,
From age to age they have defied
The utmost force of earth and hell.

[1] Verse 37. [2] Isaiah xxxi. 5.

Let earth repent, and hell despair,
This city has a sure defence;
Her name is call'd, The Lord is there,
And who has power to drive him thence?

XV. PRAISE FOR THE FOUNTAIN OPENED. *Zec.* xiii. 1.

THERE is a fountain fill'd with blood
Drawn from Emmanuel's veins;
And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.

The dying thief rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day;
And there have I, as vile as he,
Wash'd all my sins away.

Dear dying Lamb, thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransom'd church of God
Be saved to sin no more.

E'er since, by faith, I saw the stream
Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die.

Then in a nobler, sweeter song,
I'll sing thy power to save;
When this poor lisping stammering tongue
Lies silent in the grave.

Lord, I believe thou hast prepared
(Unworthy though I be)
For me a blood-bought free reward,
A golden harp for me!

'Tis strung, and tuned, for endless years,
And form'd by power divine,
To sound in God the Father's ears
No other name but thine.

XVI. THE SOWER. *Matt.* xiii. 8.

Ye sons of earth, prepare the plough,
Break up your fallow ground;
The sower is gone forth to sow,
And scatter blessings round.

The seed that finds a stony soil,
Shoots forth a hasty blade;
But ill repays the sower's toil,
Soon wither'd, scorch'd, and dead.

The thorny ground is sure to balk
All hopes of harvest there;
We find a tall and sickly stalk,
But not the fruitful ear.

The beaten path and highway side
Receive the trust in vain;
The watchful birds the spoil divide,
And pick up all the grain.

But where the Lord of grace and power
Has bless'd the happy field,
How plenteous is the golden store
The deep wrought furrows yield!

Father of mercies, we have need
Of thy preparing grace;
Let the same hand that gives the seed
Provide a fruitful place.

XVII. THE HOUSE OF PRAYER. *Mark* xi. 17.

Thy mansion is the Christian's heart
O Lord, thy dwelling-place secure!
Bid the unruly throng depart,
And leave the consecrated door.

Devoted as it is to thee,
A thievish swarm frequents the place;
They steal away my joys from me,
And rob my Saviour of his praise.

There, too, a sharp designing trade
Sin, Satan, and the world maintain;
Nor cease to press me, and persuade
To part with ease, and purchase pain.

I know them, and I hate their din,
Am weary of the bustling crowd;
But while their voice is heard within,
I cannot serve thee as I would.

Oh! for the joy thy presence gives
What peace shall reign when thou art here!
Thy presence makes this den of thieves
A calm delightful house of prayer.

And if thou make thy temple shine,
Yet, self-abased, will I adore;
The gold and silver are not mine,
I give thee what was thine before.

XVIII. LOVEST THOU ME? *John* xxi. 16.

Hark, my soul! it is the Lord:
'Tis thy Saviour, hear his word;
Jesus speaks, and speaks to thee:
"Say, poor sinner, lovest thou me?

"I deliver'd thee when bound,
And when bleeding, heal'd thy wound;
Sought thee wandering, set thee right,
Turn'd thy darkness into light.

"Can a woman's tender care
Cease towards the child she bare?
Yes, she may forgetful be,
Yet will I remember thee.

"Mine is an unchanging love,
Higher than the heights above;
Deeper than the depths beneath,
Free and faithful, strong as death.

"Thou shalt see my glory soon,
When the work of grace is done;
Partner of my throne shalt be:—
Say, poor sinner, lovest thou me?"

Lord, it is my chief complaint,
That my love is weak and faint:
Yet I love thee and adore:
Oh! for grace to love thee more!

XIX. CONTENTMENT. *Phil.* iv. 11.

FIERCE passions discompose the mind,
As tempests vex the sea:
But calm content and peace we find,
When, Lord, we turn to thee.

In vain by reason and by rule
We try to bend the will;
For none but in the Saviour's school
Can learn the heavenly skill.

Since at his feet my soul has sat,
His gracious words to hear,
Contented with my present state,
I cast on him my care.

"Art thou a sinner, soul?" he said,
"Then how canst thou complain?
How light thy troubles here, if weigh'd
With everlasting pain!

"If thou of murmuring wouldst be cured,
Compare thy griefs with mine;
Think what my love for thee endured,
And thou wilt not repine.

"'Tis I appoint thy daily lot,
And I do all things well;
Thou soon shalt leave this wretched spot,
And rise with me to dwell.

"In life my grace shall strength supply,
Proportion'd to thy day;
At death thou still shalt find me nigh,
To wipe thy tears away."

Thus I, who once my wretched days
In vain repinings spent,
Taught in my Saviour's school of grace,
Have learnt to be content.

XX. OLD TESTAMENT GOSPEL. *Heb.* iv. 2

Israel, in ancient days,
Not only had a view
Of Sinai in a blaze,
But learn'd the Gospel too;
The types and figures were a glass,
In which they saw a Saviour's face.

The paschal sacrifice,
And blood-besprinkled door,[1]

[1] Exod. xii. 13.

Seen with enlighten'd eyes,
And once applied with power,
Would teach the need of other blood,
To reconcile an angry God.

The Lamb, the Dove, set forth
His perfect innocence,[1]
Whose blood of matchless worth
Should be the soul's defence;
For he who can for sin atone,
Must have no failings of his own.

The scape-goat on his head[2]
The people's trespass bore,
And to the desert led,
Was to be seen no more:
In him our Surety seem'd to say,
"Behold, I bear your sins away."

Dipt in his fellow's blood,
The living bird went free;[3]
The type, well understood,
Express'd the sinner's plea;
Described a guilty soul enlarged,
And by a Saviour's death discharged.

Jesus, I love to trace,
Throughout the sacred page,
The footsteps of thy grace,
The same in every age!
O grant that I may faithful be
To clearer light vouchsafed to me!

[1] Lev xii. 6. [2] Lev. xvi. 21. [3] Lev. xiv. 51—53.

XXI. SARDIS. *Rev.* iii. 1—6.

"WRITE to Sardis," saith the Lord,
"And write what he declares,
He whose Spirit, and whose word,
Upholds the seven stars:
All thy works and ways I search,
Find thy zeal and love decay'd;
Thou art call'd a living church,
But thou art cold and dead.

"Watch, remember, seek, and strive,
Exert thy former pains;
Let thy timely care revive,
And strengthen what remains:
Cleanse thine heart, thy works amend,
Former times to mind recall,
Lest my sudden stroke descend,
And smite thee once for all.

"Yet I number now in thee
A few that are upright;
These my Father's face shall see,
And walk with me in white.
When in judgment I appear,
They for mine shall be confest;
Let my faithful servants hear,
And woe be to the rest."

XXII. PRAYER FOR A BLESSING.

BESTOW, dear Lord, upon our youth
The gift of saving grace;
And let the seed of sacred truth
Fall in a fruitful place.

Grace is a plant, where'er it grows,
Of pure and heavenly root;
But fairest in the youngest shows,
And yields the sweetest fruit.

Ye careless ones, O hear betimes
The voice of sovereign love!
Your youth is stain'd with many crimes,
But mercy reigns above.

True, you are young, but there's a stone
Within the youngest breast;
Or half the crimes which you have done
Would rob you of your rest.

For you the public prayer is made,
Oh! join the public prayer!
For you the secret tear is shed,
O shed yourselves a tear!

We pray that you may early prove
The Spirit's power to teach;
You cannot be too young to love
That Jesus whom we preach.

XXIII. PLEADING FOR AND WITH YOUTH.

Sin has undone our wretched race,
But Jesus has restored,
And brought the sinner face to face
With his forgiving Lord.

This we repeat, from year to year,
And press upon our youth;
Lord, give them an attentive ear,
Lord, save them by thy truth.

Blessings upon the rising race!
Make this a happy hour,
According to thy richest grace,
And thine Almighty power.

We feel for your unhappy state,
(May you regard it too)
And would awhile ourselves forget
To pour out prayer for you.

We see, though you perceive it not,
The approaching awful doom;
O tremble at the solemn thought,
And flee the wrath to come!

Dear Saviour, let this new-born year
Spread an alarm abroad;
And cry in every careless ear,
"Prepare to meet thy God!"

XXIV. PRAYER FOR CHILDREN.

GRACIOUS Lord, our children see,
By thy mercy we are free;
But shall these, alas! remain
Subjects still of Satan's reign?
Israel's young ones, when of old
Pharaoh threaten'd to withhold;[1]
Then thy messenger said, "No;
Let the children also go."

When the angel of the Lord,
Drawing forth his dreadful sword,
Slew, with an avenging hand,
All the first-born of the land;[2]
Then thy people's doors he pass'd,
Where the bloody sign was placed;
Hear us, now, upon our knees,
Plead the blood of Christ for these!

Lord, we tremble, for we know
How the fierce malicious foe,
Wheeling round his watchful flight,
Keeps them ever in his sight:
Spread thy pinions, King of kings!
Hide them safe beneath thy wings;
Lest the ravenous bird of prey
Stoop, and bear the brood away.

[1] Exod. x. 9. [2] Exod. xii. 12.

XXV. JEHOVAH JESUS.

My song shall bless the Lord of all,
  My praise shall climb to his abode;
Thee, Saviour, by that name I call,
  The great supreme, the mighty God.

Without beginning or decline,
  Object of faith, and not of sense;
Eternal ages saw him shine,
  He shines eternal ages hence.

As much, when in the manger laid,
  Almighty ruler of the sky,
As when the six days' work he made
  Fill'd all the morning stars with joy.

Of all the crowns Jehovah bears,
  Salvation is his dearest claim;
That gracious sound well pleased he hears,
  And owns Emmanuel for his name.

A cheerful confidence I feel,
  My well-placed hopes with joy I see;
My bosom glows with heavenly zeal,
  To worship him who died for me.

As man, he pities my complaint,
  His power and truth are all divine;
He will not fail, he cannot faint,
  Salvation's sure, and must be mine.

XXVI. ON OPENING A PLACE FOR SOCIAL PRAYER.

Jesus! where'er thy people meet,
There they behold thy mercy-seat;
Where'er they seek thee, thou art found,
And every place is hallow'd ground.

For thou, within no walls confined,
Inhabitest the humble mind;
Such ever bring thee where they come,
And going, take thee to their home.

Dear Shepherd of thy chosen few!
Thy former mercies here renew;
Here to our waiting hearts proclaim
The sweetness of thy saving name.

Here may we prove the power of prayer,
To strengthen faith, and sweeten care;
To teach our faint desires to rise,
And bring all heaven before our eyes.

Behold, at thy commanding word
We stretch the curtain and the cord;[1]
Come thou, and fill this wider space,
And bless us with a large increase.

Lord, we are few, but thou art near;
Nor short thine arm, nor deaf thine ear;
Oh rend the heavens, come quickly down,
And make a thousand hearts thine own.

[1] Isaiah liv. 2.

XXVII. WELCOME TO THE TABLE.

This is the feast of heavenly wine,
And God invites to sup;
The juices of the living vine
Were press'd to fill the cup.

Oh! bless the Saviour, ye that eat,
With royal dainties fed;
Not heaven affords a costlier treat,
For Jesus is the bread.

The vile, the lost, he calls to them,
Ye trembling souls, appear!
The righteous in their own esteem
Have no acceptance here.

Approach, ye poor, nor dare refuse
The banquet spread for you;
Dear Saviour, this is welcome news,
Then I may venture too.

If guilt and sin afford a plea,
And may obtain a place,
Surely the Lord will welcome me,
And I shall see his face.

XXVIII. JESUS HASTING TO SUFFER.

The Saviour, what a noble flame
Was kindled in his breast,
When hasting to Jerusalem,
He march'd before the rest!

Good will to men, and zeal for God,
His every thought engross;
He longs to be baptized with blood,[1]
He pants to reach the cross!

With all his sufferings full in view,
And woes to us unknown,
Forth to the task his spirit flew;
'Twas love that urged him on.

Lord, we return thee what we can:
Our hearts shall sound abroad,
Salvation to the dying Man,
And to the rising God!

And while thy bleeding glories here
Engage our wondering eyes,
We learn our lighter cross to bear,
And hasten to the skies.

XXIX. EXHORTATION TO PRAYER.

What various hindrances we meet
In coming to a mercy seat!
Yet who that knows the worth of prayer,
But wishes to be often there?

Prayer makes the darken'd cloud withdraw,
Prayer climbs the ladder Jacob saw,
Gives exercise to faith and love,
Brings every blessing from above.

[1] Luke xii. 50.

Restraining prayer, we cease to fight;
Prayer makes the Christian's armour bright;
And Satan trembles when he sees
The weakest saint upon his knees.

While Moses stood with arms spread wide,
Success was found on Israel's side;
But when through weariness they fail'd,
That moment Amalek prevail'd.[1]

Have you no words? Ha! think again,
Words flow apace when you complain,
And fill your fellow-creature's ear
With the sad tale of all your care.

Were half the breath thus vainly spent
To Heaven in supplication sent,
Your cheerful song would oftener be,
"Hear what the Lord has done for me."

XXX. THE LIGHT AND GLORY OF THE WORD

THE Spirit breathes upon the Word,
And brings the truth to sight;
Precepts and promises afford
A sanctifying light.

A glory gilds the sacred page,
Majestic like the sun;
It gives a light to every age,
It gives, but borrows none.

[1] Exodus xvii. 11.

The hand that gave it still supplies
The gracious light and heat:
His truths upon the nations rise,
They rise, but never set.

Let everlasting thanks be thine,
For such a bright display,
As makes a world of darkness shine
With beams of heavenly day.

My soul rejoices to pursue
The steps of him I love,
Till glory breaks upon my view
In brighter worlds above.

XXXI. ON THE DEATH OF A MINISTER.

His master taken from his head,
Elisha saw him go;
And in desponding accents said,
"Ah, what must Israel do?"

But he forgot the Lord who lifts
The beggar to the throne;
Nor knew, that all Elijah's gifts
Would soon be made his own.

What! when a Paul has run his course,
Or when Apollos dies,
Is Israel left without resource?
And have we no supplies?

Yes, while the dear Redeemer lives,
We have a boundless store,
And shall be fed with what he gives,
Who lives for evermore.

XXXII. THE SHINING LIGHT.

My former hopes are fled,
My terror now begins;
I feel, alas! that I am dead
In trespasses and sins.

Ah, whither shall I fly!
I hear the thunder roar;
The law proclaims destruction nigh,
And vengeance at the door.

When I review my ways,
I dread impending doom:
But sure a friendly whisper says,
"Flee from the wrath to come."

I see, or think I see,
A glimmering from afar;
A beam of day, that shines for me,
To save me from despair.

Forerunner of the sun,[1]
It marks the Pilgrim's way;
I'll gaze upon it while I run,
And watch the rising day.

[1] Psalm cxxx. 6.

XXXIII. SEEKING THE BELOVED.

To those who know the Lord, I speak,
Is my beloved near?
The bridegroom of my soul I seek,
Oh! when will he appear?

Though once a man of grief and shame,
Yet now he fills a throne,
And bears the greatest, sweetest name,
That earth or heaven have known.

Grace flies before, and love attends
His steps where'er he goes;
Though none can see him but his friends,
And they were once his foes.

He speaks—obedient to his call
Our warm affections move:
Did he but shine alike on all,
Then all alike would love.

Then love in every heart would reign,
And war would cease to roar;
And cruel and bloodthirsty men
Would thirst for blood no more.

Such Jesus is, and such his grace,
Oh, may he shine on you!
And tell him, when you see his face,
I long to see him too.[1]

[1] Cant. v. 8.

XXXIV. THE WAITING SOUL.[1]

Breathe from the gentle south, O Lord,
And cheer me from the north;
Blow on the treasures of thy word,
And call the spices forth!

I wish, Thou knowest, to be resigned,
And wait with patient hope;
But hope delayed fatigues the mind,
And drinks the spirit up.

Help me to reach the distant goal;
Confirm my feeble knee;
Pity the sickness of a soul
That faints for love of thee!

Cold as I feel this heart of mine,
Yet, since I feel it so,
It yields some hope of life divine
Within, however low.

I seem forsaken and alone,
I hear the lion roar;
And every door is shut but one,
And that is Mercy's door.

There, till the dear Deliverer come,
I'll wait with humble prayer;
And when he calls his exile home,
The Lord shall find me there.

1 This hymn, which has not been marked as Cowper's in the Olney Collection, and consequently not included in any edition of his works, is here restored to him on the authority of Mrs. Johnson, the widow of his excellent kinsman.

XXXV. LIGHT SHINING OUT OF DARKNESS.

God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill,
He treasures up his bright designs,
And works his sovereign will.

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust him for his grace:
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face.

His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,[1]
And scan his work in vain:
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain.

[1] John xiii. 7.

XXXVI. WELCOME CROSS.

'Tis my happiness below,
Not to live without the cross,
But the Saviour's power to know,
Sanctifying every loss:
Trials must and will befall;
But with humble faith to see
Love inscribed upon them all,
This is happiness to me.

God in Israel sows the seeds
Of affliction, pain, and toil;
These spring up and choke the weeds
Which would else o'erspread the soil:
Trials make the promise sweet,
Trials give new life to prayer;
Trials bring me to his feet,
Lay me low, and keep me there.

Did I meet no trials here,
No chastisement by the way:
Might I not, with reason, fear
I should prove a cast-away.
Bastards may escape the rod,[1]
Sunk in earthly vain delight;
But the true-born child of God
Must not, would not, if he might.

[1] Hebrews xii. 8.

XXXVII. AFFLICTIONS SANCTIFIED BY THE WORD.

O HOW I love thy holy word,
Thy gracious covenant, O Lord!
It guides me in the peaceful way;
I think upon it all the day.

What are the mines of shining wealth,
The strength of youth, the bloom of health!
What are all joys compared with those
Thine everlasting word bestows!

Long unafflicted, undismay'd,
In pleasure's path secure I stray'd;
Thou madest me feel thy chastening rod,[1]
And straight I turn'd unto my God.

What though it pierced my fainting heart,
I bless'd thine hand that caused the smart;
It taught my tears awhile to flow,
But saved me from eternal woe.

Oh! hadst thou left me unchastised,
Thy precepts I had still despised;
And still the snare in secret laid
Had my unwary feet betray'd.

I love thee, therefore, O my God,
And breathe towards thy dear abode;
Where, in thy presence fully blest,
Thy chosen saints for ever rest.

[1] Psalm cxix. 71.

XXXVIII. TEMPTATION.

The billows swell, the winds are high,
Clouds overcast my wintry sky;
Out of the depths to thee I call,—
My fears are great, my strength is small.

O Lord, the pilot's part perform,
And guard and guide me through the storm,
Defend me from each threatening ill,
Control the waves,—say, "Peace, be still."

Amidst the roaring of the sea
My soul still hangs her hope on thee;
Thy constant love, thy faithful care,
Is all that saves me from despair.

Dangers of every shape and name
Attend the followers of the Lamb,
Who leave the world's deceitful shore,
And leave it to return no more.

Though tempest-toss'd and half a wreck,
My Saviour through the floods I seek;
Let neither winds nor stormy main
Force back my shatter'd bark again.

XXXIX. LOOKING UPWARDS IN A STORM.

God of my life, to thee I call,
Afflicted at thy feet I fall;
When the great water-floods prevail,[1]
Leave not my trembling heart to fail!

[1] Psalm lxix. 15.

Friend of the friendless and the faint!
Where should I lodge my deep complaint?
Where but with thee, whose open door
Invites the helpless and the poor!

Did ever mourner plead with thee,
And thou refuse that mourner's plea?
Does not the word still fix'd remain,
That none shall seek thy face in vain!

That were a grief I could not bear,
Didst thou not hear and answer prayer;
But a prayer-hearing, answering God
Supports me under every load.

Fair is the lot that's cast for me;
I have an Advocate with thee;
They whom the world caresses most
Have no such privilege to boast.

Poor though I am, despised, forgot,[1]
Yet God, my God, forgets me not:
And he is safe, and must succeed,
For whom the Lord vouchsafes to plead.

XL. THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF DEATH

My soul is sad, and much dismay'd,
See, Lord, what legions of my foes,
With fierce Apollyon at their head,
My heavenly pilgrimage oppose!

[1] Psalm xl. 17.

See, from the ever burning lake,
How like a smoky cloud they rise!
With horrid blasts my soul they shake,
With storms of blasphemies and lies.

Their fiery arrows reach the mark,[1]
My throbbing heart with anguish tear;
Each lights upon a kindred spark,
And finds abundant fuel there,

I hate the thought that wrongs the Lord;
Oh! I would drive it from my breast,
With thy own sharp two-edged sword,
Far as the east is from the west.

Come, then, and chase the cruel host,
Heal the deep wounds I have received!
Nor let the powers of darkness boast,
That I am foil'd, and thou art grieved!

XLI. PEACE AFTER A STORM.

When darkness long has veil'd my mind,
And smiling day once more appears;
Then, my Redeemer, then I find
The folly of my doubts and fears.

Straight I upbraid my wandering heart,
And blush that I should ever be
Thus prone to act so base a part,
Or harbour one hard thought of thee!

[1] Ephes. vi. 16.

Oh! let me then at length be taught
What I am still so slow to learn;
That God is love, and changes not,
Nor knows the shadow of a turn.

Sweet truth, and easy to repeat!
But when my faith is sharply tried,
I find myself a learner yet,
Unskilful, weak, and apt to slide.

But, O my Lord, one look from thee
Subdues the disobedient will;
Drives doubt and discontent away,
And thy rebellious worm is still.

Thou art as ready to forgive
As I am ready to repine;
Thou, therefore, all the praise receive;
Be shame and self-abhorrence mine.

XLII. MOURNING AND LONGING.

The Saviour hides his face!
My spirit thirsts to prove
Renew'd supplies of pardoning grace,
And never-fading love.

The favour'd souls who know
What glories shine in him,
Pant for his presence as the roe
Pants for the living stream!

What trifles tease me now!
They swarm like summer flies,
They cleave to every thing I do,
And swim before my eyes.

How dull the Sabbath day,
Without the Sabbath's Lord!
How toilsome then to sing and pray,
And wait upon the word!

Of all the truths I hear,
How few delight my taste!
I glean a berry here and there,
But mourn the vintage past.

Yet let me (as I ought)
Still hope to be supplied;
No pleasure else is worth a thought,
Nor shall I be denied.

Though I am but a worm,
Unworthy of his care,
The Lord will my desire perform,
And grant me all my prayer.

XLIII. SELF-ACQUAINTANCE.

Dear Lord! accept a sinful heart,
Which of itself complains,
And mourns with much and frequent smart,
The evil it contains.

There fiery seeds of anger lurk,
  Which often hurt my frame;
And wait but for the tempter's work,
  To fan them to a flame.

Legality holds out a bribe
  To purchase life from thee;
And discontent would fain prescribe
  How thou shalt deal with me.

While unbelief withstands thy grace,
  And puts the mercy by;
Presumption, with a brow of brass,
  Says, "Give me, or I die."

How eager are my thoughts to roam
  In quest of what they love!
But ah! when duty calls them home,
  How heavily they move!

Oh, cleanse me in a Saviour's blood,
  Transform me by thy power,
And make me thy beloved abode,
  And let me roam no more.

XLIV. PRAYER FOR PATIENCE.

Lord, who hast suffer'd all for me,
  My peace and pardon to procure,
The lighter cross I bear for thee,
  Help me with patience to endure.

The storm of loud repining hush,
I would in humble silence mourn;
Why should the unburnt, though burning bush
Be angry as the crackling thorn?

Man should not faint at thy rebuke,
Like Joshua falling on his face,[1]
When the cursed thing that Achan took
Brought Israel into just disgrace.

Perhaps some golden wedge suppress'd,
Some secret sin offends my God;
Perhaps that Babylonish vest,
Self-righteousness, provokes the rod.

Ah! were I buffeted all day,
Mock'd, crown'd with thorns, and spit upon;
I yet should have no right to say,
My great distress is mine alone.

Let me not angrily declare
No pain was ever sharp like mine,
Nor murmur at the cross I bear,
But rather weep, remembering thine.

XLV. SUBMISSION.

O Lord, my best desire fulfil,
And help me to resign
Life, health, and comfort to thy will,
And make thy pleasure mine.

[1] Joshua vii. 10, 11.

Why should I shrink at thy command,
Whose love forbids my fears?
Or tremble at the gracious hand
That wipes away my tears?

No, rather let me freely yield
What most I prize to thee;
Who never hast a good withheld,
Or wilt withhold from me.

Thy favour, all my journey through,
Thou art engaged to grant;
What else I want or think I do,
'Tis better still to want.

Wisdom and mercy guide my way,
Shall I resist them both?
A poor blind creature of a day,
And crush'd before the moth!

But ah! my inward spirit cries,
Still bind me to thy sway;
Else the next cloud that veils the skies,
Drives all these thoughts away.

XLVI. THE HAPPY CHANGE.

How blest thy creature is, O God,
When, with a single eye,
He views the lustre of thy word,
The dayspring from on high!

Through all the storms that veil the skies,
And frown on earthly things,
The Sun of Righteousness he eyes,
With healing on his wings.

Struck by that light, the human heart,
A barren soil no more,
Sends the sweet smell of grace abroad,
Where serpents lurk'd before.[1]

The soul a dreary province once
Of Satan's dark domain,
Feels a new empire form'd within,
And owns a heavenly reign.

The glorious orb, whose golden beams
The fruitful year control,
Since first, obedient to thy word,
He started from the goal,

Has cheer'd the nations with the joys
His orient rays impart;
But, Jesus, 'tis thy light alone
Can shine upon the heart.

XLVII. RETIREMENT.

Far from the world, O Lord, I flee,
From strife and tumult far;
From scenes where Satan wages still
His most successful war.

[1] Isaiah xxxv. 7.

The calm retreat, the silent shade,
With prayer and praise agree;
And seem, by thy sweet bounty made,
For those who follow thee.

There if thy Spirit touch the soul,
And grace her mean abode,
Oh, with what peace, and joy, and love,
She communes with her God!

There like the nightingale she pours
Her solitary lays;
Nor asks a witness of her song,
Nor thirsts for human praise.

Author and guardian of my life,
Sweet source of light divine,
And (all harmonious names in one)
My Saviour, thou art mine!

What thanks I owe thee, and what love,
A boundless, endless store,
Shall echo through the realms above
When time shall be no more.

XLVIII. THE HIDDEN LIFE.

To tell the Saviour all my wants,
How pleasing is the task!
Nor less to praise him when he grants
Beyond what I can ask.

My labouring spirit vainly seeks
To tell but half the joy;
With how much tenderness he speaks,
And helps me to reply.

Nor were it wise, nor should I choose,
Such secrets to declare;
Like precious wines their taste they lose,
Exposed to open air.

But this with boldness I proclaim,
Nor care if thousands hear,
Sweet is the ointment of his name,
Not life is half so dear.

And can you frown, my former friends,
Who knew what once I was;
And blame the song that thus commends
The Man who bore the cross?

Trust me, I draw the likeness true,
And not as fancy paints;
Such honour may he give to you,
For such have all his saints.

XLIX. JOY AND PEACE IN BELIEVING.

Sometimes a light surprises
The Christian while he sings;
It is the Lord who rises
With healing on his wings:

When comforts are declining,
He grants the soul again
A season of clear shining,
To cheer it after rain.

In holy contemplation,
We sweetly then pursue
The theme of God's salvation,
And find it ever new;
Set free from present sorrow,
We cheerfully can say,
E'en let the unknown to-morrow[1]
Bring with it what it may.

It can bring with it nothing,
But he will bear us through;
Who gives the lilies clothing,
Will clothe his people too;
Beneath the spreading heavens
No creature but is fed;
And he who feeds the ravens
Will give his children bread.

Though vine nor fig tree neither[2]
Their wonted fruit shall bear,
Though all the field should wither,
Nor flocks nor herds be there:
Yet God the same abiding,
His praise shall tune my voice;
For, while in him confiding,
I cannot but rejoice.

[1] Matthew vi. 34. [2] Habakkuk iii. 17, 18.

L. TRUE PLEASURES.

LORD, my soul with pleasure springs
When Jesus' name I hear;
And when God the Spirit brings
The word of promise near:
Beauties too, in holiness,
Still delighted I perceive;
Nor have words that can express
The joys thy precepts give.

Clothed in sanctity and grace,
How sweet it is to see
Those who love thee as they pass,
Or when they wait on thee!
Pleasant too, to sit and tell
What we owe to love divine;
Till our bosoms grateful swell,
And eyes begin to shine.

Those the comforts I possess,
Which God shall still increase,
All his ways are pleasantness,[1]
And all his paths are peace.
Nothing Jesus did or spoke,
Henceforth let me ever slight;
For I love his easy yoke,[2]
And find his burden light.

[1] Prov. iii. 17. [2] Matt. xi 30.

LI. THE CHRISTIAN.

Honour and happiness unite
To make the Christian's name a praise;
How fair the scene, how clear the light,
That fills the remnant of his days!

A kingly character he bears,
No change his priestly office knows;
Unfading is the crown he wears,
His joys can never reach a close.

Adorn'd with glory from on high,
Salvation shines upon his face;
His robe is of the ethereal dye,
His steps are dignity and grace.

Inferior honours he disdains,
Nor stoops to take applause from earth;
The King of kings himself maintains
The expenses of his heavenly birth.

The noblest creature seen below,
Ordain'd to fill a throne above;
God gives him all he can bestow,
His kingdom of eternal love!

My soul is ravish'd at the thought!
Methinks from earth I see him rise!
Angels congratulate his lot,
And shout him welcome to the skies!

LII. LIVELY HOPE AND GRACIOUS FEAR.

I WAS a grovelling creature once,
And basely cleaved to earth;
I wanted spirit to renounce
The clod that gave me birth.

But God has breathed upon a worm,
And sent me from above
Wings such as clothe an angel's form,
The wings of joy and love.

With these to Pisgah's top I fly,
And there delighted stand,
To view, beneath a shining sky,
The spacious promised land.

The Lord of all the vast domain
Has promised it to me;
The length and breadth of all the plain
As far as faith can see.

How glorious is my privilege!
To thee for help I call;
I stand upon a mountain's edge,
Oh save me, lest I fall!

Though much exalted in the Lord,
My strength is not my own;
Then let me tremble at his word,
And none shall cast me down.

LIII. FOR THE POOR.

When Hagar found the bottle spent,
And wept o'er Ishmael,
A message from the Lord was sent
To guide her to a well.[1]

Should not Elijah's cake and cruse[2]
Convince us at this day,
A gracious God will not refuse
Provisions by the way?

His saints and servants shall be fed,
The promise is secure;
"Bread shall be given them," as he said,
"Their water shall be sure."[3]

Repasts far richer they shall prove,
Than all earth's dainties are;
'Tis sweet to taste a Saviour's love,
Though in the meanest fare.

To Jesus then your trouble bring,
Nor murmur at your lot;
While you are poor and he is King,
You shall not be forgot.

LIV. MY SOUL THIRSTETH FOR GOD.

I thirst, but not as once I did
The vain delights of earth to share;
Thy wounds, Emmanuel, all forbid
That I should seek my pleasures there.

[1] Gen. xxi. 19. [2] 1 Kings xvii. 14. [3] Isa. xxxiii. 16.

It was the sight of thy dear cross
First wean'd my soul from earthly things;
And taught me to esteem as dross
The mirth of fools and pomp of kings.

I want that grace that springs from thee,
That quickens all things where it flows,
And makes a wretched thorn like me
Bloom as the myrtle or the rose.

Dear fountain of delight unknown!
No longer sink below the brim;
But overflow and pour me down
A living, and life-giving stream!

For sure, of all the plants that share
The notice of thy father's eye,
None proves less grateful to his care,
Or yields him meaner fruit than I.

LV. LOVE CONSTRAINING TO OBEDIENCE.

No strength of nature can suffice
To serve the Lord aright:
And what she has she misapplies,
For want of clearer light.

How long beneath the law I lay
In bondage and distress;
I toil'd the precept to obey,
But toil'd without success.

Then, to abstain from outward sin
Was more than I could do;
Now, if I feel its power within,
I feel I hate it too.

Then all my servile works were done
A righteousness to raise;
Now, freely chosen in the Son,
I freely choose his ways.

"What shall I do," was then the word,
"That I may worthier grow?"
"What shall I render to the Lord?"
Is my inquiry now.

To see the law by Christ fulfill'd,
And hear his pardoning voice,
Changes a slave into a child,[1]
And duty into choice.

LVI. THE HEART HEALED AND CHANGED BY MERCY

Sin enslaved me many years,
And led me bound and blind;
Till at length a thousand fears
Came swarming o'er my mind.
"Where," said I, in deep distress,
"Will these sinful pleasures end?
How shall I secure my peace,
And make the Lord my friend?"

[1] Romans iii. 31.

Friends and ministers said much
The gospel to enforce;
But my blindness still was such,
I chose a legal course:
Much I fasted, watch'd and strove,
Scarce would show my face abroad,
Fear'd almost to speak or move,
A stranger still to God.

Thus afraid to trust his grace,
Long time did I rebel;
Till despairing of my case,
Down at his feet I fell:
Then my stubborn heart he broke,
And subdued me to his sway;
By a simple word he spoke,
"Thy sins are done away."

LVII. HATRED OF SIN.

Holy Lord God! I love thy truth,
Nor dare thy least commandment slight;
Yet pierced by sin, the serpent's tooth,
I mourn the anguish of the bite.

But though the poison lurks within,
Hope bids me still with patience wait;
Till death shall set me free from sin,
Free from the only thing I hate.

Had I a throne above the rest,
Where angels and archangels dwell,
One sin, unslain, within my breast,
Would make that heaven as dark as hell.

The prisoner sent to breathe fresh air,
And bless'd with liberty again,
Would mourn, were he condemn'd to wear
One link of all his former chain.

But oh! no foe invades the bliss,
When glory crowns the Christian's head;
One view of Jesus as he is
Will strike all sin for ever dead.

LVIII. THE NEW CONVERT.

The new-born child of gospel grace,
Like some fair tree when summer 's nigh,
Beneath Emmanuel's shining face
Lifts up his blooming branch on high.

No fears he feels, he sees no foes,
No conflict yet his faith employs,
Nor has he learnt to whom he owes
The strength and peace his soul enjoys.

But sin soon darts its cruel sting,
And comforts sinking day by day,
What seemed his own, a self-fed spring,
Proves but a brook that glides away.

When Gideon arm'd his numerous host,
The Lord soon made his numbers less;
And said, "Lest Israel vainly boast,[1]
'My arm procured me this success.'"

Thus will he bring our spirits down,
And draw our ebbing comforts low,
That saved by grace, but not our own,
We may not claim the praise we owe.

LIX. TRUE AND FALSE COMFORTS.

O God, whose favourable eye
The sin-sick soul revives,
Holy and heavenly is the joy
Thy shining presence gives.

Not such as hypocrites suppose,
Who with a graceless heart
Taste not of thee, but drink a dose,
Prepared by Satan's art.

Intoxicating joys are theirs,
Who, while they boast their light,
And seem to soar above the stars,
Are plunging into night.

Lull'd in a soft and fatal sleep,
They sin and yet rejoice;
Were they indeed the Saviour's sheep,
Would they not hear his voice?

[1] Judges vii. 2.

Be mine the comforts that reclaim
The soul from Satan's power;
That make me blush for what I am,
And hate my sin the more.

'Tis joy enough, my All in All,
At thy dear feet to lie;
Thou wilt not let me lower fall,
And none can higher fly.

LX. A LIVING AND A DEAD FAITH

The Lord receives his highest praise
From humble minds and hearts sincere;
While all the loud professor says
Offends the righteous Judge's ear.

To walk as children of the day,
To mark the precepts' holy light,
To wage the warfare, watch, and pray,
Show who are pleasing in his sight.

Not words alone it cost the Lord,
To purchase pardon for his own;
Nor will a soul by grace restored
Return the Saviour words alone.

With golden bells, the priestly vest,
And rich pomegranates border'd round,[1]
The need of holiness express'd,
And call'd for fruit as well as sound.

[1] Exod. xxviii. 33.

Easy, indeed, it were to reach
A mansion in the courts above,
If swelling words and fluent speech
Might serve instead of faith and love.

But none shall gain the blissful place,
Or God's unclouded glory see,
Who talks of free and sovereign grace,
Unless that grace has made him free!

LXI. ABUSE OF THE GOSPEL.

Too many, Lord, abuse thy grace
In this licentious day;
And while they boast they see thy face,
They turn their own away.

Thy book displays a gracious light
That can the blind restore;
But these are dazzled by the sight,
And blinded still the more.

The pardon such presume upon,
They do not beg, but steal;
And when they plead it at thy throne,
Oh! where's the Spirit's seal?

Was it for this, ye lawless tribe,
The dear Redeemer bled?
Is this the grace the saints imbibe
From Christ the living head?

Ah, Lord, we know thy chosen few
Are fed with heavenly fare;
But these, the wretched husks they chew
Proclaim them what they are.

The liberty our hearts implore
Is not to live in sin;
But still to wait at wisdom's door,
Till mercy calls us in.

LXII. THE NARROW WAY.

What thousands never knew the road!
What thousands hate it when 'tis known!
None but the chosen tribes of God
Will seek or choose it for their own.

A thousand ways in ruin end,
One only leads to joys on high;
By that my willing steps ascend,
Pleased with a journey to the sky.

No more I ask or hope to find
Delight or happiness below;
Sorrow may well possess the mind
That feeds where thorns and thistles grow.

The joy that fades is not for me,
I seek immortal joys above;
There glory without end shall be
The bright reward of faith and love.

Cleave to the world, ye sordid worms,
Contented lick your native dust;
But God shall fight, with all his storms,
Against the idol of your trust.

LXIII. DEPENDENCE.

To keep the lamp alive,
With oil we fill the bowl;
'Tis water makes the willow thrive,
And grace that feeds the soul.

The Lord's unsparing hand
Supplies the living stream;
It is not at our own command,
But still derived from him.

Beware of Peter's word,[1]
Nor confidently say,
"I never will deny thee, Lord,"
But, "Grant I never may."

Man's wisdom is to seek
His strength in God alone;
And e'en an angel would be weak,
Who trusted in his own.

Retreat beneath his wings,
And in his grace confide;
This more exalts the King of kings[2]
Than all your works beside.

[1] Matthew xxvi. 33. [2] John vi. 29.

In Jesus is our store,
Grace issues from his throne;
Whoever says, "I want no more,"
Confesses he has none.

LXIV. NOT OF WORKS.

GRACE, triumphant in the throne,
Scorns a rival, reigns alone;
Come and bow beneath her sway,
Cast your idol works away.
Works of man, when made his plea,
Never shall accepted be;
Fruits of pride (vainglorious worm!)
Are the best he can perform.

Self, the god his soul adores,
Influences all his powers;
Jesus is a slighted name,
Self-advancement all his aim:
But when God the Judge shall come,
To pronounce the final doom,
Then for rocks and hills to hide
All his works and all his pride!

Still the boasting heart replies,
What! the worthy and the wise,
Friends to temperance and peace,
Have not these a righteousness?
Banish every vain pretence
Built on human excellence;
Perish every thing in man,
But the grace that never can.

LXV. PRAISE FOR FAITH.

Of all the gifts thine hand bestows,
Thou Giver of all good!
Not heaven itself a richer knows
Than my Redeemer's blood.

Faith too, the blood-receiving grace,
From the same hand we gain;
Else, sweetly as it suits our case,
That gift had been in vain.

Till thou thy teaching power apply,
Our hearts refuse to see,
And weak, as a distemper'd eye,
Shut out the view of thee.

Blind to the merits of thy Son,
What misery we endure!
Yet fly that hand from which alone
We could expect a cure.

We praise thee, and would praise thee more,
To thee our all we owe;
The precious Saviour, and the power
That makes him precious too.

LXVI. GRACE AND PROVIDENCE.

Almighty King! whose wondrous hand
Supports the weight of sea and land,
Whose grace is such a boundless store,
No heart shall break that sighs for more.

Thy providence supplies my food,
And 'tis thy blessing makes it good;
My soul is nourish'd by thy word,
Let soul and body praise the Lord.

My streams of outward comfort came
From him who built this earthly frame
Whate'er I want his bounty gives,
By whom my soul for ever lives.

Either his hand preserves from pain,
Or, if I feel it, heals again;
From Satan's malice shields my breast,
Or overrules it for the best.

Forgive the song that falls so low
Beneath the gratitude I owe!
It means thy praise, however poor,
An angel's song can do no more.

LXVII. I WILL PRAISE THE LORD AT ALL TIMES.

Winter has a joy for me,
While the Saviour's charms I read,
Lowly, meek, from blemish free,
In the snowdrop's pensive head.

Spring returns, and brings along
Life-invigorating suns:
Hark! the turtle's plaintive song
Seems to speak his dying groans!

Summer has a thousand charms,
All expressive of his worth;
'Tis his sun that lights and warms,
His the air that cools the earth.

What! has Autumn left to say
Nothing of a Saviour's grace?
Yes, the beams of milder day
Tell me of his smiling face.

Light appears with early dawn,
While the sun makes haste to rise;
See his bleeding beauties drawn
On the blushes of the skies.

Evening with a silent pace,
Slowly moving in the west,
Shows an emblem of his grace,
Points to an eternal rest.

LXVIII. LONGING TO BE WITH CHRIST.

To Jesus, the Crown of my Hope,
My soul is in haste to be gone:
O bear me, ye cherubims, up,
And waft me away to his throne!

My Saviour, whom absent I love,
Whom not having seen I adore;
Whose name is exalted above
All glory, dominion, and power.

Dissolve thou these bonds, that detain[1]
My soul from her portion in thee;
Ah! strike off this adamant chain,
And make me eternally free.

When that happy era begins,
When arrayed in thy glories I shine,
Nor grieve any more, by my sins,
The bosom on which I recline;

O then shall the veil be removed,
And round thee thy brightness be poured,
I shall meet Him whom absent I loved,
I shall see Him whom unseen I adored.

And then, never more shall the fears,
The trials, temptations, and woes,
Which darken this valley of tears,
Intrude on my blissful repose;

Or, if yet remembered above,
Remembrance no sadness shall raise,
Thy will be but new signs of thy love,
New themes for my wonder and praise.

Thus the strokes which from sin and from pain
Shall set me eternally free,
Will but strengthen and rivet the chain
Which binds me, my Saviour, to thee.

[1] This stanza, and all those that follow, are adopted from Mr. Grimshawe's edition. The first two stanzas only are given by Mr. Southey, with the title, "Fragment of a Hymn."

TO THE REVEREND MR. NEWTON.

AN INVITATION INTO THE COUNTRY.

THE swallows in their torpid state
Compose their useless wing,
And bees in hives as idly wait
The call of early Spring.

The keenest frost that binds the stream,
The wildest wind that blows,
Are neither felt nor fear'd by them,
Secure of their repose.

But man, all feeling and awake,
The gloomy scene surveys;
With present ills his heart must ache
And pant for brighter days.

Old Winter, halting o'er the mead,
Bids me and Mary mourn;
But lovely Spring peeps o'er his head,
And whispers your return.

Then April, with her sister May,
Shall chase him from the bowers,
And weave fresh garlands every day,
To crown the smiling hours.

And if a tear, that speaks regret
Of happier times, appear,
A glimpse of joy, that we have met,
Shall shine and dry the tear.

CATHARINA.

ADDRESSED TO MISS STAPLETON,

(NOW MRS. COURTENAY.)

She came—she is gone—we have met—
And meet perhaps never again;
The sun of that moment is set,
And seems to have risen in vain.
Catharina has fled like a dream—
(So vanishes pleasure, alas!)
But has left a regret and esteem
That will not so suddenly pass.

The last evening ramble we made,
Catharina, Maria, and I,
Our progress was often delay'd
By the nightingale warbling nigh.
We paused under many a tree,
And much she was charm'd with a tone,
Less sweet to Maria and me,
Who so lately had witness'd her own.

My numbers that day she had sung,
And gave them a grace so divine,
As only her musical tongue
Could infuse into numbers of mine.
The longer I heard, I esteem'd
The work of my fancy the more,
And e'en to myself never seem'd
So tuneful a poet before.

Though the pleasures of London exceed
In number the days of the year,
Catharina, did nothing impede,
Would feel herself happier here;
For the close-woven arches of limes
On the banks of our river, I know,
Are sweeter to her many times
Than aught that the city can show.

So it is when the mind is endued
With a well-judging taste from above,
Then, whether embellish'd or rude,
'Tis nature alone that we love.
The achievements of art may amuse,
May even our wonder excite,
But groves, hills, and valleys diffuse
A lasting, a sacred delight.

Since then in the rural recess
Catharina alone can rejoice,
May it still be her lot to possess
The scene of her sensible choice!

To inhabit a mansion remote
From the clatter of street-pacing steeds,
And by Philomel's annual note
To measure the life that she leads.

With her book, and her voice, and her lyre,
To wing all her moments at home;
And with scenes that new rapture inspire,
As oft as it suits her to roam;
She will have just the life she prefers,
With little to hope or to fear,
And ours would be pleasant as hers,
Might we view her enjoying it here.

CATHARINA:

THE SECOND PART.

ON HER MARRIAGE TO GEORGE COURTENAY, ESQ

BELIEVE it or not, as you choose,
The doctrine is certainly true,
That the future is known to the Muse,
And poets are oracles too.
I did but express a desire
To see Catharina at home,
At the side of my friend George's fire,
And lo — she is actually come.

Such prophecy some may despise,
But the wish of a poet and friend

Perhaps is approved in the skies,
And therefore attains to its end.
'Twas a wish that flew ardently forth
From a bosom effectually warm'd
With the talents, the graces, and worth
Of the person for whom it was form'd.

Maria[1] would leave us, I knew,
To the grief and regret of us all,
But less to our grief, could we view
Catharina the Queen of the Hall.
And therefore I wish'd as I did,
And therefore this union of hands
Not a whisper was heard to forbid,
But all cry — Amen — to the banns.

Since, therefore, I seem to incur
No danger of wishing in vain
When making good wishes for her,
I will e'en to my wishes again —
With one I have made her a wife,
And now I will try with another,
Which I cannot suppress for my life —
How soon I can make her a mother.

June, 1792

[1] Lady Throckmorton.

EPITAPH ON FOP, A DOG BELONGING TO LADY THROCKMORTON.

Though once a puppy, and though Fop by name,
Here moulders one whose bones some honour claim.
No sycophant, although of spaniel race,
And though no hound, a martyr to the chase --
Ye squirrels, rabbits, leverets, rejoice!
Your haunts no longer echo to his voice;
This record of his fate exulting view,
He died worn out with vain pursuit of you.
"Yes," — the indignant shade of Fop replies —
"And worn with vain pursuit man also dies."

August, 1792.

THE MORALIZER CORRECTED.

A TALE.

A hermit (or if 'chance you hold
That title now too trite and old),
A man, once young, who lived retired
As hermit could have well desired,
His hours of study closed at last,
And finish'd his concise repast,
Stoppled his cruise, replaced his book
Within its customary nook,
And, staff in hand, set forth to share
The sober cordial of sweet air,
Like Isaac, with a mind applied
To serious thought at evening tide.

Autumnal rains had made it chill,
And from the trees, that fringed his hill,
Shades slanting at the close of day
Chill'd more his else delightful way.
Distant a little mile he spied
A western bank's still sunny side,
And right toward the favour'd place
Proceeding with his nimblest pace,
In hope to bask a little yet,
Just reach'd it when the sun was set.
Your hermit, young and jovial sirs!
Learns something from whate'er occurs—
And hence, he said, my mind computes
The real worth of man's pursuits.
His object chosen, wealth or fame,
Or other sublunary game,
Imagination to his view
Presents it deck'd with every hue
That can seduce him not to spare
His powers of best exertion there,
But youth, health, vigour to expend
On so desirable an end.
Ere long approach life's evening shades,
The glow that fancy gave it fades;
And, earn'd too late, it wants the grace
That first engaged him in the chase.
True, answer'd an angelic guide,
Attendant at the senior's side—
But whether all the time it cost,
To urge the fruitless chase be lost,

Must be decided by the worth
Of that which call'd his ardour forth.
Trifles pursued, whate'er the event,
Must cause him shame or discontent;
A vicious object still is worse,
Successful there he wins a curse;
But he, whom e'en in life's last stage
Endeavours laudable engage,
Is paid at least in peace of mind,
And sense of having well design'd;
And if, ere he attain his end,
His sun precipitate descend,
A brighter prize than that he meant
Shall recompense his mere intent.
No virtuous wish can bear a date
Either too early or too late.

THE FAITHFUL BIRD.

The greenhouse is my summer seat;
My shrubs displaced from that retreat
Enjoy'd the open air;
Two goldfinches, whose sprightly song
Had been their mutual solace long,
Lived happy prisoners there.

They sang as blithe as finches sing
That flutter loose on golden wing,

And frolic where they list;
Strangers to liberty, 'tis true,
But that delight they never knew,
And therefore never miss'd.

But nature works in every breast,
With force not easily suppress'd;
And Dick felt some desires,
That, after many an effort vain,
Instructed him at length to gain
A pass between his wires.

The open windows seem'd to invite
The freeman to a farewell flight;
But Tom was still confined;
And Dick, although his way was clear,
Was much too generous and sincere
To leave his friend behind.

So settling on his cage, by play,
And chirp, and kiss, he seem'd to say,
You must not live alone—
Nor would he quit that chosen stand
Till I, with slow and cautious hand,
Return'd him to his own.

Oh ye, who never taste the joys
Of Friendship, satisfied with noise,
Fandango, ball, and rout!
Blush when I tell you how a bird
A prison with a friend preferr'd
To liberty without.

THE NEEDLESS ALARM.

A TALE.

THERE is a field, through which I often pass,
Thick overspread with moss and silky grass,
Adjoining close to Kilwick's echoing wood,
Where oft the bitch-fox hides her hapless brood,
Reserved to solace many a neigbouring squire,
That he may follow them through brake and brier,
Contusion hazarding of neck or spine,
Which rural gentlemen call sport divine.
A narrow brook, by rushy banks conceal'd,
Runs in a bottom, and divides the field;
Oaks intersperse it that had once a head,
But now wear crests of oven wood instead,
And where the land slopes to its watery bourn
Wide yawns a gulf beside a ragged thorn;
Bricks line the sides, but shiver'd long ago,
And horrid brambles intertwine below;
A hollow scoop'd, I judge, in ancient time,
For baking earth, or burning rock to lime.
Not yet the hawthorn bore her berries red,
With which the fieldfare, wintry guest, is fed;
Nor Autumn yet had brush'd from every spray,
With her chill hand, the mellow leaves away;
But corn was housed, and beans were in the stack,
Now therefore issued forth the spotted pack,

With tails high mounted, ears hung low, and throats
With a whole gamut fill'd of heavenly notes,
For which, alas! my destiny severe,
Though ears she gave me two, gave me no ear.
The sun accomplishing his early march,
His lamp now planted on Heaven's topmost arch,
When, exercise and air my only aim,
And heedless whither, to that field I came,
Ere yet with ruthless joy the happy hound
Told hill and dale that Reynard's track was found,
Or with the high-raised horn's melodious clang
All Kilwick [1] and all Dingledcrry [1] rang.
Sheep grazed the field; some with soft bosom press'd
The herb as soft, while nibbling stray'd the rest;
Nor noise was heard but of the hasty brook,
Struggling, detain'd in many a petty nook.
All seem'd so peaceful, that, from them convey'd,
To me their peace by kind contagion spread.
But when the huntsman, with distended cheek,
'Gan make his instrument of music speak,
And from within the wood that crash was heard,
Though not a hound from whom it burst appear'd,
The sheep recumbent and the sheep that grazed,
All huddling into phalanx, stood and gazed,
Admiring, terrified, the novel strain,
Then coursed the field around, and coursed it round again;

[1] Two woods belonging to John Throckmorton, Esq.

But recollecting, with a sudden thought,
That flight in circles urged advanced them nought,
They gather'd close around the old pit's brink,
And thought again—but knew not what to think.

The man to solitude accustom'd long,
Perceives in every thing that lives a tongue;
Not animals alone, but shrubs and trees
Have speech for him, and understood with ease;
After long drought, when rains abundant fall,
He hears the herbs and flowers rejoicing all;
Knows what the freshness of their hue implies,
How glad they catch the largess of the skies;
But, with precision nicer still, the mind
He scans of every locomotive kind;
Birds of all feather, beasts of every name,
That serve mankind, or shun them, wild or tame;
The looks and gestures of their griefs and fears
Have all articulation in his ears;
He spells them true by intuition's light,
And needs no glossary to set him right.

This truth premised was needful as a text,
To win due credence to what follows next.

Awhile they mused; surveying every face,
Thou hadst supposed them of superior race;
Their periwigs of wool and fears combined,
Stamp'd on each countenance such marks of mind,
That sage they seem'd, as lawyers o'er a doubt,
Which, puzzling long, at last they puzzle out;
Or academic tutors, teaching youths,
Sure ne'er to want them, mathematic truths;

When thus a mutton statelier than the rest,
A ram, the ewes and wethers sad address'd.
Friends! we have lived too long. I never heard
Sounds such as these, so worthy to be fear'd.
Could I believe, that winds for ages pent
In earth's dark womb have found at last a vent,
And from their prisonhouse below arise,
With all these hideous howlings to the skies,
I could be much composed, nor should appear,
For such a cause, to feel the slightest fear.
Yourselves have seen what time the thunders roll'd
All night, me resting quiet in the fold.
Or heard we that tremendous bray alone,
I could expound the melancholy tone;
Should deem it by our old companion made,
The ass; for he, we know, has lately stray'd,
And being lost, perhaps, and wandering wide,
Might be supposed to clamour for a guide.
But ah! those dreadful yells what soul can hear,
That owns a carcass, and not quake for fear?
Demons produce them doubtless, brazen-claw'd,
And fang'd with brass the demons are abroad;
I hold it therefore wisest and most fit
That, life to save, we leap into the pit.
Him answer'd then his loving mate and true,
But more discreet than he, a Cambrian ewe.
How? leap into the pit our life to save?
To save our life leap all into the grave?
For can we find it less? Contemplate first
The depth how awful! falling there, we burst:

Or should the brambles, interposed, our fall
In part abate, that happiness were small;
For with a race like theirs no chance I see
Of peace or ease to creatures clad as we.
Meantime, noise kills not. Be it Dapple's bray,
Or be it not, or be it whose it may,
And rush those other sounds, that seem by tongues
Of demons utter'd, from whatever lungs,
Sounds are but sounds, and, till the cause appear,
We have at least commodious standing here.
Come fiend, come fury, giant, monster, blast
From earth or hell, we can but plunge at last.
While thus she spake, I fainter heard the peals,
For Reynard, close attended at his heels
By panting dog, tired man, and spatter'd horse,
Through mere good fortune, took a different course.
The flock grew calm again, and I, the road
Following, that led me to my own abode,
Much wonder'd that the silly sheep had found
Such cause of terror in an empty sound
So sweet to huntsman, gentleman, and hound.

MORAL.

Beware of desperate steps. The darkest day,
Live till to-morrow, will have pass'd away.

BOADICEA.

AN ODE.

When the British warrior queen,
Bleeding from the Roman rods,
Sought, with an indignant mien,
Counsel of her country's gods,

Sage beneath the spreading oak
Sat the Druid, hoary chief;
Every burning word he spoke
Full of rage and full of grief.

Princess! if our aged eyes
Weep upon thy matchless wrongs,
'Tis because resentment ties
All the terrors of our tongues.

Rome shall perish—write that word
In the blood that she has spilt;
Perish, hopeless and abhorr'd,
Deep in ruin as in guilt.

Rome, for empire far renown'd,
Tramples on a thousand states;
Soon her pride shall kiss the ground—
Hark! the Gaul is at her gates!

Other Romans shall arise,
Heedless of a soldier's name;
Sounds, not arms, shall win the prize,
Harmony the path to fame.

Then the progeny that springs
From the forests of our land,
Arm'd with thunder, clad with wings,
Shall a wider world command.

Regions Cæsar never knew
Thy posterity shall sway;
Where his eagles never flew,
None invincible as they.

Such the bard's prophetic words,
Pregnant with celestial fire,
Bending as he swept the chords
Of his sweet but awful lyre.

She, with all a monarch's pride,
Felt them in her bosom glow:
Rush'd to battle, fought, and died;
Dying, hurl'd them at the foe.

Ruffians, pitiless as proud,
Heaven awards the vengeance due;
Empire is on us bestow'd,
Shame and ruin wait for you.

HEROISM.

THERE was a time when Ætna's silent fire
Slept unperceived, the mountain yet entire;
When, conscious of no danger from below,
She tower'd a cloud-capt pyramid of snow.
No thunders shook with deep intestine sound
The blooming groves that girdled her around.
Her unctuous olives, and her purple vines
(Unfelt the fury of those bursting mines),
The peasant's hopes, and not in vain, assured,
In peace upon her sloping sides matured.
When on a day, like that of the last doom,
A conflagration labouring in her womb,
She teem'd and heaved with an infernal birth,
That shook the circling seas and solid earth.
Dark and voluminous the vapours rise,
And hang their horrors in the neighbouring skies,
While through the stygian veil, that blots the day,
In dazzling streaks the vivid lightnings play.
But oh! what muse, and in what powers of song,
Can trace the torrent as it burns along?
Havoc and devastation in the van,
It marches o'er the prostrate works of man—
Vines, olives, herbage, forests disappear,
And all the charms of a Sicilian year.
  Revolving seasons, fruitless as they pass,
See it an uniuform'd and idle mass;

Without a soil to invite the tiller's care,
Or blade that might redeem it from despair.
Yet time at length (what will not time achieve ?)
Clothes it with earth, and bids the produce live.
Once more the spiry myrtle crowns the glade,
And ruminating flocks enjoy the shade.
O bliss precarious, and unsafe retreats,
O charming Paradise of shortlived sweets !
The selfsame gale that wafts the fragrance round
Brings to the distant ear a sullen sound :
Again the mountain feels the imprison'd foe,
Again pours ruin on the vale below.
Ten thousand swains the wasted scene deplore,
That only future ages can restore.

Ye monarchs, whom the lure of honour draws,
Who write in blood the merits of your cause,
Who strike the blow, then plead your own defence,
Glory your aim, but justice your pretence ;
Behold in Ætna's emblematic fires
The mischiefs your ambitious pride inspires !

Fast by the stream that bounds your just domain,
And tells you where ye have a right to reign,
A nation dwells, not envious of your throne,
Studious of peace, their neighbour's and their own,
Ill-fated race ! how deeply must they rue
Their only crime, vicinity to you !
The trumpet sounds, your legions swarm abroad,
Through the ripe harvest lies their destined road ;
At every step beneath their feet they tread
The life of multitudes, a nation's bread !

Earth seems a garden in its loveliest dress
Before them, and behind a wilderness.
Famine, and Pestilence, her first-born son,
Attend to finish what the sword begun;
And echoing praises, such as fiends might earn,
And Folly pays, resound at your return.
A calm succeeds—but Plenty, with her train
Of heartfelt joys, succeeds not soon again:
And years of pining indigence must show
What scourges are the gods that rule below.

Yet man, laborious man, by slow degrees
(Such is his thirst of opulence and ease)
Plies all the sinews of industrious toil,
Gleans up the refuse of the general spoil,
Rebuilds the towers that smoked upon the plain,
And the sun gilds the shining spires again.

Increasing commerce and reviving art
Renew the quarrel on the conqueror's part;
And the sad lesson must be learn'd once more,
That wealth within is ruin at the door.
What are ye, monarchs, laurelled heroes, say,
But Ætnas of the suffering world ye sway?
Sweet Nature, stripp'd of her embroider'd robe,
Deplores the wasted regions of her globe;
And stands a witness at Truth's awful bar,
To prove you there destroyers as ye are.

O place me in some Heaven-protected isle,
Where Peace, and Equity, and Freedom smile;
Where no volcano pours his fiery flood,
No crested warrior dips his plume in blood;

Where Power secures what Industry has won;
Where to succeed is not to be undone;
A land that distant tyrants hate in vain,
In Britain's isle, beneath a George's reign!

ON

THE RECEIPT OF MY MOTHER'S PICTURE

OUT OF NORFOLK, THE GIFT OF MY COUSIN, ANN BODHAM.

O THAT those lips had language! Life has pass'd
With me but roughly since I heard thee last.
Those lips are thine—thy own sweet smile I see,
The same that oft in childhood solaced me;
Voice only fails, else how distinct they say,
"Grieve not, my child, chase all thy fears away!"
The meek intelligence of those dear eyes
(Blest be the art that can immortalize,
The art that baffles Time's tyrannic claim
To quench it) here shines on me still the same.
Faithful remembrancer of one so dear,
O welcome guest, though unexpected here!
Who bidst me honour with an artless song,
Affectionate, a mother lost so long.
I will obey, not willingly alone,
But gladly, as the precept were her own:
And, while that face renews my filial grief,
Fancy shall weave a charm for my relief,

Shall steep me in Elysian reverie,
A momentary dream, that thou art she.
My mother! when I learn'd that thou wast dead,
Say, wast thou conscious of the tears I shed?
Hover'd thy spirit o'er thy sorrowing son,
Wretch even then, life's journey just begun?
Perhaps thou gavest me, though unfelt, a kiss;
Perhaps a tear, if souls can weep in bliss—
Ah, that maternal smile! it answers—Yes.
I heard the bell toll'd on thy burial day,
I saw the hearse that bore thee slow away,
And, turning from my nursery window, drew
A long, long sigh, and wept a last adieu!
But was it such?—It was.—Where thou art gone
Adieus and farewells are a sound unknown.
May I but meet thee on that peaceful shore,
The parting word shall pass my lips no more!
Thy maidens, grieved themselves at my concern!
Oft gave me promise of thy quick return.
What ardently I wish'd, I long believed,
And, disappointed still, was still deceived.
By expectation every day beguiled,
Dupe of to-morrow even from a child.
Thus many a sad to-morrow came and went,
Till, all my stock of infant sorrows spent,
I learn'd at last submission to my lot,
But, though I less deplored thee, ne'er forgot.
Where once we dwelt our name is heard no more,
Children not thine have trod my nursery floor;
And where the gardener Robin, day by day,
Drew me to school along the public way,

Delighted with my bauble coach, and wrapp'd
In scarlet mantle warm, and velvet capped,
'Tis now become a history little known,
That once we call'd the pastoral house our own.
Shortlived possession! but the record fair,
That memory keeps of all thy kindness there,
Still outlives many a storm, that has effaced
A thousand other themes less deeply traced.
Thy nightly visits to my chamber made,
That thou mightst know me safe and warmly laid;
Thy morning bounties ere I left my home,
The biscuit, or confectionary plum;
The fragrant waters on my cheeks bestow'd
By thy own hand, till fresh they shone and glow'd:
All this, and more endearing still than all,
Thy constant flow of love, that knew no fall,
Ne'er roughen'd by those cataracts and breaks,
That humour interposed too often makes;
All this still legible in memory's page,
And still to be so to my latest age,
Adds joy to duty, makes me glad to pay
Such honours to thee as my numbers may;
Perhaps a frail memorial, but sincere,
Not scorn'd in Heaven, though little noticed here.
Could Time, his flight reversed, restore the hours,
When, playing with thy vesture's tissued flowers,
The violet, the pink, the jessamine,
I prick'd them into paper with a pin,
(And thou wast happier than myself the while,
Wouldst softly speak, and stroke my head and
smile),

Could those few pleasant days again appear,
Might one wish bring them, would I wish them here?
I would not trust my heart—the dear delight
Seems so to be desired, perhaps I might.—
But no—what here we call our life is such,
So little to be loved, and thou so much,
That I should ill requite thee to constrain
Thy unbound spirit into bonds again.

Thou, as a gallant bark from Albion's coast,
(The storms all weather'd and the ocean cross'd)
Shoots into port at some well-haven'd isle,
Where spices breathe, and brighter seasons smile,
There sits quiescent on the floods, that show
Her beauteous form reflected clear below,
While airs impregnated with incense play
Around her, fanning light her streamers gay—
So thou, with sails how swift! hast reach'd the shore,
"Where tempests never beat nor billows roar;"[1]
And thy loved consort on the dangerous tide
Of life long since has anchor'd by thy side.
But me, scarce hoping to attain that rest,
Always from port withheld, always distress'd—
Me howling blasts drive devious, tempest-toss'd,
Sails ripp'd, seams opening wide, and compass lost,
And day by day some current's thwarting force
Sets me more distant from a prosperous course.
Yet O the thought, that thou art safe, and he!
That thought is joy, arrive what may to me.
My boast is not that I deduce my birth
From loins enthroned, and rulers of the earth;

[1] Garth.

But higher far my proud pretensions rise—
The son of parents pass'd into the skies.
And now, farewell—Time unrevoked has run
His wonted course, yet what I wish'd is done.
By contemplation's help, not sought in vain,
I seem to have lived my childhood o'er again;
To have renew'd the joys that once were mine,
Without the sin of violating thine;
And, while the wings of fancy still are free,
And I can view this mimic show of thee,
Time has but half succeeded in his theft—
Thyself removed, thy power to soothe me left.

FRIENDSHIP.[1]

Amicitia nisi inter bonos esse non potest.
CICERO.

WHAT virtue, or what mental grace,
But men unqualified and base
Will boast it their possession?
Profusion apes the noble part
Of liberality of heart,
And dulness of discretion.

[1] The variances between the early and late copies of this poem are remarkable, and possess a curious interest as evidence of the pains bestowed by Cowper on the revision of his works. It will be seen from the two versions here given, that two stanzas in the poem as originally written (1782) were subsequently omitted, and six new stanzas added, besides the introduction of extensive alterations.

If every polish'd gem we find
Illuminating heart or mind,
  Provoke to imitation;
No wonder friendship does the same,
That jewel of the purest flame,
  Or rather constellation.

No knave but boldly will pretend
The requisites that form a friend,
  A real and a sound one;
Nor any fool, he would deceive,
But prove as ready to believe,
  And dream that he had found one.

Candid, and generous, and just,
Boys care but little whom they trust,
  An error soon corrected—
For who but learns in riper years
That man, when smoothest he appears,
  Is most to be suspected?

But here again a danger lies,
Lest, having misapplied our eyes,
  And taken trash for treasure,
We should unwarily conclude
Friendship a false ideal good,
  A mere Utopian pleasure.

An acquisition rather rare
Is yet no subject of despair;
  Nor is it wise complaining,

If either on forbidden ground,
Or where it was not to be found,
We sought without attaining.

No friendship will abide the test
That stands on sordid interest,
Or mean self-love erected;
Nor such as may awhile subsist
Between the sot and sensualist,
For vicious ends connected.

Who seek a friend should come disposed
To exhibit, in full bloom disclosed,
The graces and the beauties
That form the character he seeks,
For 'tis a union that bespeaks
Reciprocated duties.

Mutual attention is implied,
And equal truth on either side,
And constantly supported;
'Tis senseless arrogance to accuse
Another of sinister views,
Our own as much distorted.

But will sincerity suffice?
It is indeed above all price,
And must be made the basis;
But every virtue of the soul
Must constitute the charming whole,
All shining in their places.

A fretful temper will divide
The closest knot that may be tied
By ceaseless sharp corrosion:
A temper passionate and fierce
May suddenly your joys disperse
At one immense explosion.

In vain the talkative unite
In hopes of permanent delight—
The secret just committed,
Forgetting its important weight,
They drop through mere desire to prate,
And by themselves outwitted.

How bright soe'er the prospect seems,
All thoughts of friendship are but dreams,
If envy chance to creep in;
An envious man, if you succeed,
May prove a dangerous foe indeed,
But not a friend worth keeping.

As envy pines at good possess'd,
So jealousy looks forth distress'd
On good that seems approaching;
And, if success his steps attend,
Discerns a rival in a friend,
And hates him for encroaching.

Hence authors of illustrious name,
Unless belied by common fame,
Are sadly prone to quarrel,

To deem the wit a friend displays
A tax upon their own just praise,
And pluck each other's laurel.

A man renown'd for repartee
Will seldom scruple to make free
With friendship's finest feeling,
Will thrust a dagger at your breast,
And say he wounded you in jest,
By way of balm for healing.

Whoever keeps an open ear
For tattlers will be sure to hear
The trumpet of contention;
Aspersion is the babbler's trade,
To listen is to lend him aid,
And rush into dissension.

A friendship that in frequent fits
Of controversial rage emits
The sparks of disputation,
Like hand in hand insurance plates,
Most unavoidably creates
The thought of conflagration.

Some fickle creatures boast a soul
True as a needle to the pole,
Their humour yet so various—
They manifest their whole life through
The needle's deviations too,
Their love is so precarious.

The great and small but rarely meet
On terms of amity complete;
  Plebeians must surrender,
And yield so much to noble folk,
It is combining fire with smoke,
  Obscurity with splendour.

Some are so placid and serene
(As Irish bogs are always green)
  They sleep secure from waking;
And are indeed a bog, that bears
Your unparticipated cares
  Unmoved and without quaking.

Courtier and patriot cannot mix
Their heterogeneous politics
  Without an effervescence,
Like that of salts with lemon juice,
Which does not yet like that produce
  A friendly coalescence.

Religion should extinguish strife,
And make a calm of human life;
  But friends that chance to differ
On points which God has left at large,
How freely will they meet and charge!
  No combatants are stiffer.

To prove at last my main intent
Needs no expense of argument,
  No cutting and contriving—

Seeking a real friend, we seem
To adopt the chymist's golden dream,
With still less hope of thriving.

Sometimes the fault is all our own,
Some blemish in due time made known
By trespass or omission;
Sometimes occasion brings to light
Our friend's defect long hid from sight,
And even from suspicion.

Then judge yourself, and prove your man
As circumspectly as you can,
And, having made election,
Beware no negligence of yours,
Such as a friend but ill endures,
Enfeeble his affection.

That secrets are a sacred trust,
That friends should be sincere and just,
That constancy befits them,
Are observations on the case
That savour much of commonplace,
And all the world admits them.

But 'tis not timber, lead, and stone,
An architect requires alone
To finish a fine building—
The palace were but half complete,
If he could possibly forget
The carving and the gilding.

The man that hails you Tom or Jack,
And proves by thumps upon your back
How he esteems your merit,
Is such a friend that one had need
Be very much his friend indeed
To pardon or to bear it.

As similarity of mind,
Or something not to be defined,
First fixes our attention;
So manners decent and polite,
The same we practised at first sight,
Must save it from declension.

Some act upon this prudent plan,
"Say little, and hear all you can."
Safe policy, but hateful—
So barren sands imbibe the shower,
But render neither fruit nor flower,
Unpleasant and ungrateful.

The man I trust, if shy to me,
Shall find me as reserved as he,
No subterfuge or pleading
Shall win my confidence again;
I will by no means entertain
A spy on my proceeding.

These samples—for alas! at last
These are but samples, and a taste
Of evils yet unmention'd—

May prove the task, a task indeed,
In which 'tis much if we succeed,
  However well intention'd.

Pursue the search, and you will find
Good sense and knowledge of mankind
  To be at least expedient,
And, after summing all the rest,
Religion ruling in the breast
  A principal ingredient.

The noblest Friendship ever shown
The Saviour's history makes known,
  Though some have turn'd and turn'd it;
And, whether being craz'd or blind,
Or seeking with a bias'd mind,
  Have not, it seems, discern'd it.

O Friendship! if my soul forego
Thy dear delights while here below,
  To mortify and grieve me,
May I myself at last appear
Unworthy, base, and insincere,
  Or may my friend deceive me!

ON FRIENDSHIP.

Amicitia nisi inter bonos esse non potest.
CICERO.

What virtue can we name, or grace,
But men unqualified and base
Will boast it their possession?
Profusion apes the noble part
Of liberality of heart,
And dulness of discretion.

But, as the gem of richest cost
Is ever counterfeited most,
So, always, imitation
Employs the utmost skill she can
To counterfeit the faithful man,
The friend of long duration.

Some will pronounce me too severe—
But long experience speaks me clear;
Therefore, that censure scorning,
I will proceed to mark the shelves
On which so many dash themselves,
And give the simple warning.

Youth, unadmonish'd by a guide,
Will trust to any fair outside;
An error soon corrected;
For who but learns with riper years,
That man, when smoothest he appears,
Is most to be suspected?

But here again a danger lies;
Lest thus deluded by our eyes,
And taking trash for treasure,
We should, when undeceived, conclude
Friendship imaginary good,
A mere Utopian pleasure.

An acquisition, rather rare,
Is yet no subject of despair;
Nor should it seem distressful
If, either on forbidden ground,
Or where it was not to be found,
We sought it unsuccessful.

No friendship will abide the test
That stands on sordid interest
And mean self-love erected;
Nor such as may awhile subsist
'Twixt sensualist and sensualist,
For vicious ends connected.

Who hopes a friend, should have a heart
Himself well furnish'd for the part,
And ready on occasion
To show the virtue that he seeks;
For 'tis a union that bespeaks
A just reciprocation.

A fretful temper will divide
The closest knot that may be tied,
By ceaseless sharp corrosion:

A temper passionate and fierce
May suddenly your joys disperse
At one immense explosion.

In vain the talkative unite
With hope of permanent delight:
The secret just committed
They drop through mere desire to prate,
Forgetting its important weight,
And by themselves outwitted.

How bright soe'er the prospect seems,
All thoughts of friendship are but dreams,
If envy chance to creep in;
An envious man, if you succeed,
May prove a dangerous foe indeed,
But not a friend worth keeping.

As envy pines at good possess'd,
So jealousy looks forth distress'd
On good that seems approaching;
And, if success his steps attend,
Discerns a rival in a friend,
And hates him for encroaching.

Hence authors of illustrious name
(Unless belied by common fame)
Are sadly prone to quarrel;
To deem the wit a friend displays
So much of loss to their own praise,
And pluck each other's laurel.

A man renown'd for repartee
Will seldom scruple to make free
With friendship's finest feeling;
Will thrust a dagger at your breast,
And tell you 'twas a special jest,
By way of balm for healing.

Beware of tattlers; keep your ear
Close stopt against the tales they bear,
Fruits of their own invention;
The separation of chief friends
Is what their kindness most intends;
Their sport is your dissension.

Friendship that wantonly admits
A joco-serious play of wits
In brilliant altercation,
Is union such as indicates,
Like hand-in-hand insurance-plates,
Danger of conflagration.

Some fickle creatures boast a soul
True as the needle to the pole;
Yet shifting, like the weather,
The needle's constancy forego
For any novelty, and show
Its variations rather.

Insensibility makes some
Unseasonably deaf and dumb,
When most you need their pity;

'Tis waiting till the tears shall fall
From Gog and Magog in Guildhall,
Those playthings of the city.

The great and small but rarely meet
On terms of amity complete:
The attempt would scarce be madder,
Should any from the bottom hope,
At one huge stride, to reach the top
Of an erected ladder.

Courtier and patriot cannot mix
Their heterogeneous politics
Without an effervescence,
Such as of salts with lemon juice,
But which is rarely known to induce,
Like that, a coalescence.

Religion should extinguish strife,
And make a calm of human life:
But even those, who differ
Only on topics left at large,
How fiercely will they meet and charge!
No combatants are stiffer.

To prove, alas! my main intent,
Needs no great cost of argument,
No cutting and contriving;
Seeking a real friend, we seem
To adopt the chymist's golden dream
With still less hope of thriving.

Then judge, or ere you choose your man,
As circumspectly as you can,
And, having made election,
See that no disrespect of yours,
Such as a friend but ill endures,
Enfeeble his affection.

It is not timber, lead, and stone,
An architect requires alone,
To finish a great building;
The palace were but half complete
Could he by any chance forget
The carving and the gilding.

As similarity of mind,
Or something not to be defined,
First rivets our attention;
So manners, decent and polite,
The same we practised at first sight,
Must save it from declension.

The man who hails you Tom—or Jack,
And proves by thumping on your back
His sense of your great merit,
Is such a friend, that one had need
Be very much his friend indeed,
To pardon or to bear it.

Some friends make this their prudent plan—
"Say little, and hear all you can;"
Safe policy, but hateful.

So barren sands imbibe the shower,
But render neither fruit nor flower,
Unpleasant and ungrateful.

They whisper trivial things, and small;
But to communicate at all
Things serious deem improper;
Their feculence and froth they show,
But keep the best contents below,
Just like a simmering copper.

These samples (for, alas! at last
These are but samples, and a taste
Of evils yet unmention'd)
May prove the task a task indeed,
In which 'tis much if we succeed,
However well intention'd.

Pursue the theme, and you shall find
A disciplined and furnish'd mind
To be at least expedient,
And, after summing all the rest,
Religion ruling in the breast
A principal ingredient.

True friendship has, in short, a grace
More than terrestrial in its face,
That proves it heaven-descended:
Man's love of woman not so pure,
Nor, when sincerest, so secure
To last till life is ended.

1782.

ON A MISCHIEVOUS BULL,

WHICH THE OWNER OF HIM SOLD AT THE AUTHOR'S INSTANCE.

Go — thou art all unfit to share
The pleasures of this place
With such as its old tenants are,
Creatures of gentler race.

The squirrel here his hoard provides,
Aware of wintry storms,
And woodpeckers explore the sides
Of rugged oaks for worms.

The sheep here smooths the knotted thorn
With frictions of her fleece;
And here I wander eve and morn,
Like her, a friend to peace.

Ah! — I could pity thee exiled
From this secure retreat —
I would not lose it to be styled
The happiest of the great.

But thou canst taste no calm delight;
Thy pleasure is to show
Thy magnanimity in fight,
Thy prowess — therefore, go —

I care not whether east or north,
So I no more may find thee;
The angry Muse thus sings thee forth,
And claps the gate behind thee.

ANNUS MEMORABILIS, 1789.

WRITTEN IN COMMEMORATION OF HIS MAJESTY'S HAPPY RECOVERY.

I RANSACKED, for a theme of song,
Much ancient chronicle, and long;
I read of bright embattled fields,
Of trophied helmets, spears, and shields,
Of chiefs, whose single arm could boast
Prowess to dissipate a host;
Through tomes of fable and of dream
I sought an eligible theme,
But none I found, or found them shared
Already by some happier bard.
To modern times, with truth to guide
My busy search I next applied;
Here cities won and fleets dispersed
Urged loud a claim to be rehearsed,
Deeds of unperishing renown,
Our fathers' triumphs and our own.
Thus as the bee, from bank to bower,
Assiduous sips at every flower,
But rests on none till that be found
Where most nectareous sweets abound,
So I, from theme to theme display'd
In many a page historic stray'd,
Siege after siege, fight after fight,

Contemplating with small delight
(For feats of sanguinary hue
Not always glitter in my view),
Till, settling on the current year,
I found the far-sought treasure near.
A theme for poetry divine,
A theme to ennoble even mine,
In memorable Eighty-nine.

The spring of Eighty-nine shall be
An æra cherish'd long by me,
Which joyful I will oft record,
And thankful at my frugal board;
For then the clouds of Eighty-eight,
That threaten'd England's trembling state
With loss of what she least could spare,
Her sovereign's tutelary care,
One breath of Heaven, that cried—Restore!
Chased, never to assemble more:
And far the richest crown on earth,
If valued by its wearer's worth,
The symbol of a righteous reign,
Sat fast on George's brows again.

Then peace and joy again possess'd
Our Queen's long-agitated breast;
Such joy and peace as can be known
By sufferers like herself alone,
Who losing, or supposing lost,
The good on earth they valued most,
For that dear sorrow's sake forego
All hope of happiness below,

Then suddenly regain the prize,
And flash thanksgivings to the skies!
O Queen of Albion, queen of isles!
Since all thy tears were changed to smiles,
The eyes, that never saw thee, shine
With joy not unallied to thine,
Transports not chargeable with art
Illume the land's remotest part,
And strangers to the air of courts,
Both in their toils and at their sports,
The happiness of answer'd prayers,
That gilds thy features, show in theirs.
If they who on thy state attend,
Awe-struck, before thy presence bend,
'Tis but the natural effect
Of grandeur that ensures respect;
But she is something more than queen
Who is beloved where never seen.

HYMN.

FOR THE USE OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL AT OLNEY.

Hear, Lord, the song of praise and prayer,
In Heaven thy dwelling place,
From infants made the public care,
And taught to seek thy face.

Thanks for thy word, and for thy day,
And grant us, we implore,
Never to waste in sinful play
Thy holy sabbaths more.

Thanks that we hear,—but O impart
To each desires sincere,
That we may listen with our heart,
And learn as well as hear.

For if vain thoughts the minds engage
Of older far than we,
What hope, that, at our heedless age,
Our minds should e'er be free?

Much hope, if thou our spirits take
Under thy gracious sway,
Who canst the wisest wiser make,
And babes as wise as they.

Wisdom and bliss thy word bestows,
A sun that ne'er declines,
And be thy mercies shower'd on those
Who placed us where it shines.

STANZAS

SUBJOINED TO THE YEARLY BILL OF MORTALITY OF THE PARISH OF ALL-SAINTS, NORTHAMPTON,[1] ANNO DOMINI 1787.

Pallida Mors æquo pulsat pede pauperum tabernas,
Regumque turres. HORACE.

Pale Death with equal foot strikes wide the door
Of royal halls and hovels of the poor.

WHILE thirteen moons saw smoothly run
The Nen's barge-laden wave,
All these, life's rambling journey done,
Have found their home, the grave.

Was man (frail always) made more frail
Than in foregoing years?
Did famine or did plague prevail,
That so much death appears?

No; these were vigorous as their sires
Nor plague nor famine came;
This annual tribute Death requires,
And never waives his claim.

[1] Composed for John Cox, parish clerk of Northampton.

Like crowded forest trees we stand,
And some are mark'd to fall;
The axe will smite at God's command,
And soon shall smite us all.

Green as the bay tree, ever green,
With its new foliage on,
The gay, the thoughtless, have I seen,
I pass'd—and they were gone.

Read, ye that run, the awful truth
With which I charge my page;
A worm is in the bud of youth,
And at the root of age.

No present health can health insure
For yet an hour to come;
No medicine, though it oft can cure,
Can always balk the tomb.

And O! that humble as my lot,
And scorn'd as is my strain,
These truths, though known, too much forgot,
I may not teach in vain.

So prays your clerk with all his heart,
And, ere he quits his pen,
Begs you for once to take his part,
And answer all—Amen!

ON A SIMILAR OCCASION.

FOR THE YEAR 1788.

Quod adest, memento
Componere æquus. Cætera fluminis
Ritu feruntur. HORACE.

Improve the present hour, for all beside
Is a mere feather on a torrent's tide.

Could I, from Heaven inspired, as sure presage
To whom the rising year shall prove his last,
As I can number in my punctual page,
And item down the victims of the past;

How each would trembling wait the mournful sheet
On which the press might stamp him next to die;
And, reading here his sentence, how replete
With anxious meaning, Heavenward turn his eye!

Time then would seem more precious than the joys
In which he sports away the treasure now;
And prayer more seasonable than the noise
Of drunkards, or the music-drawing bow.

Then doubtless many a trifler, on the brink
Of this world's hazardous and headlong shore,
Forced to a pause, would feel it good to think,
Told that his setting sun must rise no more.

Ah self-deceived! Could I prophetic say
Who next is fated, and who next to fall,
The rest might then seem privileged to play;
But, naming none, the Voice now speaks to all.

Observe the dappled foresters, how light
They bound and airy o'er the sunny glade—
One falls—the rest, wide scatter'd with affright,
Vanish at once into the darkest shade.

Had we their wisdom, should we, often warn'd,
Still need repeated warnings, and at last,
A thousand awful admonitions scorn'd,
Die self-accused of life run all to waste?

Sad waste! for which no after-thrift atones.
The grave admits no cure for guilt or sin;
Dewdrops may deck the turf that hides the bones,
But tears of godly grief ne'er flow within.

Learn then, ye living! by the mouths be taught
Of all these sepulchres, instructors true,
That, soon or late, death also is your lot,
And the next opening grave may yawn for you.

ON A SIMILAR OCCASION.

FOR THE YEAR 1739.

—Placidaque ibi demum morte quievit. VIRGIL.
There calm at length he breathed his soul away.

"O MOST delightful hour by man
Experienced here below,
The hour that terminates his span,
His folly and his woe!

"Worlds should not bribe me back to tread
Again life's dreary waste,
To see again my day o'erspread
With all the gloomy past.

"My home henceforth is in the skies,
Earth, seas, and sun, adieu!
All Heaven unfolded to my eyes,
I have no sight for you."

So spake Aspasio, firm possess'd
Of faith's supporting rod,
Then breathed his soul into its rest,
The bosom of his God.

He was a man among the few
Sincere on virtue's side;
And all his strength from Scripture drew,
To hourly use applied.

That rule he prized, by that he fear'd,
He hated, hoped, and loved;
Nor ever frown'd, or sad appear'd,
But when his heart had roved.

For he was frail as thou or I,
And evil felt within:
But when he felt it, heaved a sigh,
And loathed the thought of sin.

Such lived Aspasio; and at last
Call'd up from Earth to Heaven,
The gulf of death triumphant pass'd,
By gales of blessing driven.

His joys be mine, each Reader cries,
When my last hour arrives:
They shall be yours, my verse replies,
Such only be your lives.

ON A SIMILAR OCCASION.

FOR THE YEAR 1796.

Ne commonentem recta sperne. BUCHANAN.
Despise not my good counsel.

He who sits from day to day
Where the prison'd lark is hung,
Heedless of his loudest lay,
Hardly knows that he has sung.

Where the watchman in his round
Nightly lifts his voice on high,
None, accustom'd to the sound,
Wakes the sooner for his cry.

So your verse-man I, and clerk,
Yearly in my song proclaim
Death at hand—yourselves his mark—
And the foe's unerring aim.

Duly at my time I come,
Publishing to all aloud—
Soon the grave must be your home,
And your only suit a shroud.

But the monitory strain,
Oft repeated in your ears,
Seems to sound too much in vain,
Wins no notice, wakes no fears.

Can a truth, by all confess'd
Of such magnitude and weight,
Grow, by being oft impress'd,
Trivial as a parrot's prate?

Pleasure's call attention wins,
Hear it often as we may;
New as ever seem our sins,
Though committed every day.

Death and Judgment, Heaven and Hell—
These alone, so often heard,
No more move us than the bell
When some stranger is interr'd.

O then, ere the turf or tomb
Cover us from every eye,
Spirit of instruction, come,
Make us learn that we must die.

ON A SIMILAR OCCASION.

FOR THE YEAR 1792.

Felix, qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas,
Atque metus omnes et inexorabile fatum
Subjecit pedibus, strepitumque Acherontis avari!

VIRG.

Happy the mortal who has traced effects
To their first cause, cast fear beneath his feet,
And Death and roaring Hell's voracious fires!

THANKLESS for favours from on high,
Man thinks he fades too soon;
Though 'tis his privilege to die,
Would he improve the boon.

But he, not wise enough to scan
His blest concerns aright,
Would gladly stretch life's little span
To ages, if he might.

To ages in a world of pain,
To ages, where he goes
Gall'd by afflictions heavy chain,
And hopeless of repose.

Strange fondness of the human heart,
Enamour'd of its harm!
Strange world, that costs it so much smart,
And still has power to charm.

Whence has the world her magic power?
Why deem we death a foe?
Recoil from weary life's best hour,
And covet longer woe?

The cause is Conscience—Conscience oft
Her tale of guilt renews:
Her voice is terrible though soft,
And dread of death ensues.

Then anxious to be longer spared
Man mourns his fleeting breath:
All evils then seem light compared
With the approach of Death.

'Tis judgment shakes him; there's the fear
That prompts the wish to stay:
He has incurr'd a long arrear,
And must despair to pay.

Pay!—follow Christ, and all is paid;
His death your peace ensures;
Think on the grave where he was laid,
And calm descend to yours.

ON A SIMILAR OCCASION.

FOR THE YEAR 1793.

De sacris autem hæc sit una sententia, ut conserventur.
CIC. DE LEG.

But let us all concur in this one sentiment, that things sacred be inviolate.

He lives who lives to God alone,
And all are dead beside;
For other source than God is none
Whence life can be supplied.

To live to God is to requite
His love as best we may:
To make his precepts our delight,
His promises our stay.

But life, within a narrow ring
Of giddy joys comprised,
Is falsely named, and no such thing,
But rather death disguised.

Can life in them deserve the name,
Who only live to prove
For what poor toys they can disclaim
An endless life above?

Who much diseased, yet nothing feel;
  Much menaced, nothing dread;
Have wounds which only God can heal,
  Yet never ask his aid?

Who deem his house a useless place,
  Faith, want of common sense;
And ardour in the Christian race,
  A hypocrite's pretence?

Who trample order; and the day
  Which God asserts his own
Dishonour with unhallow'd play,
  And worship chance alone?

If scorn of God's commands, impress'd
  On word and deed, imply
The better part of man unbless'd
  With life that cannot die;

Such want it, and that want, uncured
  Till man resigns his breath,
Speaks him a criminal, assured
  Of everlasting death.

Sad period to a pleasant course!
  Yet so will God repay
Sabbaths profaned without remorse,
  And mercy cast away.

ON A GOLDFINCH,

STARVED TO DEATH IN HIS CAGE.

TIME was when I was free as air,
The thistle's downy seed my fare,
My drink the morning dew;
I perch'd at will on every spray,
My form genteel, my plumage gay,
My strains for ever new.

But gaudy plumage, sprightly strain,
And form genteel were all in vain,
And of a transient date;
For, caught and caged, and starved to death,
In dying sighs my little breath
Soon pass'd the wiry grate.

Thanks, gentle swain, for all my woes,
And thanks for this effectual close
And cure of every ill!
More cruelty could none express;
And I, if you had shown me less,
Had been your prisoner still.

THE PINEAPPLE AND THE BEE.

The pineapples, in triple row,
Were basking hot, and all in blow;
A bee of most discerning taste
Perceived the fragrance as he pass'd,
On eager wing the spoiler came,
And search'd for crannies in the frame,
Urged his attempt on every side,
To every pane his trunk applied;
But still in vain, the frame was tight,
And only pervious to the light:
Thus having wasted half the day,
He trimm'd his flight another way.
  Methinks, I said, in thee I find
The sin and madness of mankind.
To joys forbidden man aspires,
Consumes his soul with vain desires;
Folly the spring of his pursuit,
And disappointment all the fruit.
While Cynthio ogles, as she passes,
The nymph between two chariot glasses,
She is the pineapple, and he
The silly unsuccessful bee.
The maid who views with pensive air
The showglass fraught with glittering ware,

Sees watches, bracelets, rings, and lockets,
But sighs at thought of empty pockets;
Like thine, her appetite is keen,
But ah, the cruel glass between!
Our dear delights are often such,
Exposed to view, but not to touch;
The sight our foolish heart inflames,
We long for pineapples in frames;
With hopeless wish one looks and lingers:
One breaks the glass, and cuts his fingers;
But they whom truth and wisdom lead
Can gather honey from a weed.

THE LILY AND THE ROSE.

The nymph must lose her female friend,
If more admired than she—
But where will fierce contention end,
If flowers can disagree?

Within the garden's peaceful scene
Appear'd two lovely foes,
Aspiring to the rank of queen,
The Lily and the Rose.

The Rose soon redden'd into rage,
And, swelling with disdain,
Appeal'd to many a poet's page
To prove her right to reign.

The Lily's height bespoke command,
A fair imperial flower;
She seem'd design'd for Flora's hand,
The sceptre of her power.

This civil bickering and debate
The goddess chanced to hear,
And flew to save, ere yet too late,
The pride of the parterre;

Yours is, she said, the nobler hue,
And yours the statelier mien;
And, till a third surpasses you,
Let each be deem'd a queen.

Thus soothed and reconciled, each seeks
The fairest British fair;
The seat of empire is her cheeks
They reign united there.

IDEM LATINE REDDITUM.

Heu inimicitias quoties parit æmula forma,
Quam raro pulchræ, pulchra placere potest?
Sed fines ultra solitos discordia tendit,
Cum flores ipsos bilis et ira movent.

Hortus ubi dulces præbet tacitosque recessus,
Se rapit in partes gens animosa duas;
Hic sibi regales Amaryllis candida cultus,
Illic purpureo vindicat ore Rosa.

Ira Rosam et meritis quæsita superbia tangunt,
Multaque ferventi vix cohibenda sinu,
Dum sibi fautorum cict undique nomina vatum,
Jusque suum, multo carmine fulta, probat.

Altior emicat illa, et celso vertice nutat,
Ceu flores inter non habitura parem,
Fastiditque alios, et nata videtur in usus
Imperii, sceptrum, Flora quod ipsa gerat.

Nec Dea non sensit civilis murmura rixæ,
Cui curæ est pictas pandere ruris opes.
Deliciasque suas nunquam non prompta tueri,
Dum licet et locus est, ut tueatur, adest.

Et tibi forma datur procerior omnibus, inquit,
Et tibi, principibus qui solet esse, color,
Et donec vincat quædam formosior ambas,
Et tibi reginæ nomen, et esto tibi.

His ubi sedatus furor est, petit utraque nympham,
Qualem inter Veneres Anglia sola parit;
Hanc penes imperium est, nihil optant amplius,
Regnant in nitidis, et sine lite, genis. ⌈hujus

THE POPLAR FIELD.

The poplars are fell'd, farewell to the shade,
And the whispering sound of the cool colonnade;
The winds play no longer and sing in the leaves,
Nor Ouse on his bosom their image receives.

Twelve years have elapsed since I first took a view
Of my favourite field, and the bank where they grew;
And now in the grass behold they are laid,
And the tree is my seat that once lent me a shade.

The blackbird has fled to another retreat,
Where the hazels afford him a screen from the heat,
And the scene where his melody charm'd me before
Resounds with his sweet flowing ditty no more.

My fugitive years are all hasting away,
And I must ere long lie as lowly as they,
With a turf on my breast, and a stone at my head,
Ere another such grove shall arise in its stead.

'Tis a sight to engage me, if any thing can,
To muse on the perishing pleasures of man;
Though his life be a dream, his enjoyments, I see,
Have a being less durable even than he.[1]

[1] Mr. Cowper afterwards altered this last stanza in the following manner:—

The change both my heart and my fancy employs,
I reflect on the frailty of man, and his joys;
Short-lived as we are, yet our pleasures, we see,
Have a still shorter date, and die sooner than we.

IDEM LATINE REDDITUM.

Populeæ cecidit gratissima copia silvæ,
Conticuêre susurri, omnisque evanuit umbra;
Nullæ jam levibus se miscent frondibus auræ,
Et nulla in fluvio ramorum ludit imago.

Hei mihi! bis senos dum luctu torqueor annos,
His cogor silvis suetoque carere recessu,
Cum serò rediens, stratasque in gramine cernens,
Insedi arboribus, sub queîs errare solebam.

Ah ubi nunc merulæ cantus? Felicior illum
Silva tegit, duræ nondum permissa bipenni;
Scilicet exustos colles camposque patentes
Odit, et indignans et non rediturus abivit.

Sed qui succisas doleo succidar et ipse,
Et priùs huic parilis quàm creverit altera silva
Flebor; et, exequiis parvis donatus, habebo
Defixum lapidem tumulique cubantis acervum.

Tam subitò periisse videns tam digna manere,
Agnosco humanas sortes et tristia fata;
Sit licèt ipse brevis, voluerique simillimus umbræ,
Est homini brevior citiùsque obitura voluptas.

VOTUM.

O MATUTINI rores, auræque salubres,
O nemora, et lætæ rivis felicibus herbæ,
Graminei colles, et amænæ in vallibus umbræ!
Fata modò dederint quas olim in rure paterno
Delicias, procul arte, procul formidine, novi,
Quàm vellem ignotus, quod mens mea semper avebat,
Ante larem proprium placidam expectare senectam
Tum demùm, exactis non infeliciter annis,
Sortiri tacitum lapidem, aut sub cespite condi!

TRANSLATION OF PRIOR'S CHLOE AND EUPHELIA.

Mercator, vigiles oculos ut fallere possit,
Nomine sub ficto trans mare mittit opes;
Lenè sonat liquidumque meis Euphelia chordis,
Sed solam exoptant te, mea vota, Chlöe.

Ad speculum ornabat nitidos Euphelia crines,
Cum dixit mea lux, heus, cane, sume lyram;
Namque lyram juxtà positam cum carmine vidit,
Suave quidem carmen dulcisonamque lyram.

Fila lyræ vocemque paro, suspiria surgunt,
Et miscent numeris murmura mæsta meis,
Dumque tuæ memoro laudes, Euphelia, formæ,
Tota anima intereà pendet ab ore Chlöes.

Subrubet illa pudore, et contrahit altera frontem
Me torquet mea mens conscia, psallo, tremo:
Atque Cupidineâ dixit Dea cincta coronâ,
Heu! fallendi artem quam didicere parum.

INSCRIPTION

FOR THE TOMB OF MR. HAMILTON.

PAUSE here, and think: a monitory rhyme
Demands one moment of thy fleeting time.
Consult life's silent clock, thy bounding vein;
Seems it to say—"Health here has long to reign?"
Hast thou the vigour of thy youth? an eye
That beams delight? a heart untaught to sigh?
Yet fear. Youth, ofttimes healthful and at ease,
Anticipates a day it never sees;
And many a tomb, like Hamilton's, aloud
Exclaims "Prepare thee for an early shroud."

EPITAPH ON A HARE.

HERE lies, whom hound did ne'er pursue,
Nor swifter greyhound follow,
Whose foot ne'er tainted morning dew,
Nor e'er heard huntsman's halloo;

Old Tiney, surliest of his kind,
Who, nursed with tender care,
And to domestic bounds confined,
Was still a wild Jack hare.

Though duly from my hand he took
His pittance every night,
He did it with a jealous look,
And, when he could, would bite.

His diet was of wheaten bread,
And milk, and oats, and straw;
Thistles, or lettuces instead,
With sand to scour his maw.

On twigs of hawthorn he regaled,
On pippins' russet peel,
And, when his juicy salads fail'd,
Sliced carrot pleased him well.

A Turkey carpet was his lawn,
Whereon he loved to bound,
To skip and gamble like a fawn,
And swing his rump around.

His frisking was at evening hours,
For then he lost his fear,
But most before approaching showers,
Or when a storm drew near.

Eight years and five round rolling moons
He thus saw steal away,
Dozing out all his idle noons,
And every night at play.

I kept him for his humour's sake,
For he would oft beguile
My heart of thoughts that made it ache,
And force me to a smile.

But now beneath his walnut shade
He finds his long last home,
And waits, in snug concealment laid,
Till gentler Puss shall come.

He, still more aged, feels the shocks,
From which no care can save,
And, partner once of Tiney's box,
Must soon partake his grave.

EPITAPHIUM ALTERUM.

Hic etiam jacet,
Qui totum novennium vixit,
Puss.
Siste paulisper,
Qui præteriturus es,
Et tecum sic reputa:
Hunc neque canis venaticus,
Nec plumbum missile,
Nec laqueus,
Nec imbres nimii,
Confecêre:
Tamen mortuus est—
Et moriar ego.

THE FOLLOWING ACCOUNT OF

THE TREATMENT OF HIS HARES

WAS INSERTED BY COWPER IN THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE.

In the year 1774, being much indisposed both in mind and body, incapable of diverting myself either with company or books, and yet in a condition that made some diversion necessary, I was glad of any thing that would engage my attention without fatiguing it. The children of a neighbour of mine had a leveret given them for a plaything; it was at that time about three months old. Understanding better how to tease the poor creature than to feed it, and soon becoming weary of their charge, they readily consented that their father, who saw it pining and growing leaner every day, should offer it to my acceptance. I was willing enough to take the prisoner under my protection, perceiving that, in the management of such an animal, and in the attempt to tame it, I should find just that sort of employment which my case required. It was soon known among the neighbours that I was pleased with the present, and the consequence was, that in a short time I had as many leverets offered to me as would have stocked a paddock. I undertook the care of three, which it is necessary that I should here distinguish by the names I gave them—Puss, Tiney, and Bess. Notwithstanding the two feminine appellatives, I must inform you that they were all males. Immediately commencing carpenter, I built them houses to sleep in; each had a separate apartment, so contrived that their ordure would pass through the bottom of it; an earthen pan placed under each received whatsoever fell, which being duly emptied and washed, they were thus kept perfectly sweet and clean. In the daytime they had the range of a hall, and at night retired each to his own bed, never intruding into that of another.

Puss grew presently familiar, would leap into my lap, raise himself upon his hinder feet, and bite the hair from my temples. He would suffer me to take him up, and to carry him about in my arms, and has more than once fallen fast asleep upon my knee. He was ill three days, during which time I nursed him, kept him apart from his fellows, that they might not molest him (for, like many other wild animals, they persecute one of their own species that is sick), and by constant care, and trying him with a variety of herbs, restored him to perfect health. No creature could be more grateful than my patient after his recovery; a sentiment which he most significantly expressed by licking my hand, first the back of it, then the palm, then every finger separately, then between all the fingers, as if anxious to leave no part of it unsaluted; a ceremony which he never performed but once again upon a similar occasion. Finding him extremely tractable, I made it my custom to carry him always after breakfast into the garden, where he hid himself generally under the leaves of a cucumber vine, sleeping or chewing the cud till evening; in the leaves also of that vine he found a favourite repast. I had not long habituated him to this taste of liberty, before he began to be impatient for the return of the time when he might enjoy it. He would invite me to the garden by drumming upon my knee, and by a look of such expression, as it was not possible to misinterpret. If this rhetoric did not immediately succeed, he would take the skirt of my coat between his teeth, and pull it with all his force. Thus Puss might be said to be perfectly tamed, the shyness of his nature was done away, and on the whole it was visible by many symptoms, which I have not room to enumerate, that he was happier in human society than when shut up with his natural companions.

Not so Tiney; upon him the kindest treatment had not the least effect. He too was sick, and in his sickness had an equal share of my attention; but if after his recovery, I took the liberty to stroke him, he would grunt, strike with his fore feet, spring forward, and bite. He was however very entertaining in his way; even his surliness was matter of mirth,

and in his play he preserved such an air of gravity, and performed his feats with such a solemnity of manner, that in him too I had an agreeable companion.

Bess, who died soon after he was full grown, and whose death was occasioned by his being turned into his box, which had been washed, while it was yet damp, was a hare of great humour and drollery. Puss was tamed by gentle usage; Tiney was not to be tamed at all; and Bess had a courage and confidence that made him tame from the beginning. I always admited them into the parlour after supper, when the carpet affording their feet a firm hold, they would frisk, and bound, and play a thousand gambols, in which Bess, being remarkably strong and fearless, was always superior to the rest, and proved himself the Vestris of the party. One evening the cat, being in the room, had the hardiness to pat Bess upon the cheek, an indignity which he resented by drumming upon her back with such violence that the cat was happy to escape from under his paws, and hide herself.

I describe these animals as having each a character of his own. Such they were in fact, and their countenances were so expressive of that character, that, when I looked only on the face of either, I immediately knew which it was. It is said that a shepherd, however numerous his flock, soon becomes so familiar with their features, that he can, by that indication only, distinguish each from all the rest; and yet, to a common observer, the difference is hardly perceptible. I doubt not that the same discrimination in the cast of countenances would be discoverable in hares, and am persuaded that among a thousand of them no two could be found exactly similar: a circumstance little suspected by those who have not had opportunity to observe it. These creatures have a singular sagacity in discovering the minutest alteration that is made in the place to which they are accustomed, and instantly apply their nose to the examination of a new object. A small hole being burnt in the carpet, it was mended with a patch, and that patch in a moment underwent the strictest scrutiny. They seem too to be very much directed by the smell in the choice of their favourites: to some persons,

though they saw them daily, they could never be reconciled, and would even scream when they attempted to touch them; but a miller coming in engaged their affections at once; his powdered coat had charms that were irresistible. It is no wonder that my intimate acquaintance with these specimens of the kind has taught me to hold the sportsman's amusement in abhorrence; he little knows what amiable creatures he persecutes, of what gratitude they are capable, how cheerful they are in their spirits, what enjoyment they have of life, and that, impressed as they seem with a peculiar dread of man, it is only because man gives them peculiar cause for it.

That I may not be tedious, I will just give a short summary of those articles of diet that suit them best.

I take it to be a general opinion, that they graze, but it is an erroneous one, at least grass is not their staple; they seem rather to use it medicinally, soon quitting it for leaves of almost any kind. Sowthistle, dandelion, and lettuce, are their favourite vegetables, especially the last. I discovered by accident that fine white sand is in great estimation with them; I suppose as a digestive. It happened, that I was cleaning a birdcage when the hares were with me; I placed a pot filled with such sand upon the floor, which being at once directed to by a strong instinct, they devoured voraciously; since that time I have generally taken care to see them well supplied with it. They account green corn a delicacy, both blade and stalk, but the ear they seldom eat: straw of any kind, especially wheat-straw, is another of their dainties; they will feed greedily upon oats, but if furnished with clean straw never want them; it serves them also for a bed, and, if shaken up daily, will be kept sweet and dry for a considerable time. They do not indeed require aromatic herbs, but will eat a small quantity of them with great relish and are particularly fond of the plant called musk; they seem to resemble sheep in this, that, if their pasture be too succulent, they are very subject to the rot; to prevent which, I always made bread their principal nourishment, and, filling a pan with it, cut it into small squares, placed it every evening

in their chambers, for they feed only at evening and in the night; during the winter, when vegetables were not to be got, I mingled this mess of bread with shreds of carrot, adding to it the rind of apples cut extremely thin; for though they are fond of the paring, the apple itself disgusts them. These however not being a sufficient substitute for the juice of summer herbs, they must at this time be supplied with water; but so placed that they cannot overset it into their beds. I must not omit, that occasionally they are much pleased with twigs of hawthorn, and of the common brier, eating even the very wood when it is of considerable thickness.

Bess, I have said, died young; Tiney lived to be nine years old, and died at last, I have reason to think, of some hurt in his loins by a fall; Puss is still living, and has just completed his tenth year, discovering no signs of decay, nor even of age, except that he is grown more discreet and less frolicsome than he was. I cannot conclude without observing, that I have lately introduced a dog to his acquaintance, a spaniel that had never seen a hare to a hare that had never seen a spaniel. I did it with great caution, but there was no real need of it. Puss discovered no token of fear, nor Marquis the least symptom of hostility. There is, therefore, it should seem, no natural antipathy between dog and hare, but the pursuit of the one occasions the flight of the other, and the dog pursues because he is trained to it; they eat bread at the same time out of the same hand, and are in all respects sociable and friendly.

I should not do complete justice to my subject, did I not add, that they have no ill scent belonging to them, that they are indefatigably nice in keeping themselves clean, for which purpose nature has furnished them with a brush under each foot; and that they are never infested by any vermin.

May 28, 1784.

MEMORANDUM FOUND AMONG MR. COWPER'S PAPERS.

Tuesday, March 9, 1786.

This day died poor Puss, aged eleven years eleven months. He died between twelve and one at noon, of mere old age, and apparently without pain.

THE END.

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